CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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IT MARKS FIRST HIT ON US TECH GIANTS

BATELCO HQ IN FLAMES

The headquarters of Batelco, the largest telecommunications company in Bahrain, hosts Amazon servers, and has reportedly gone offline.

MANAMA

Iranian missiles have struck Batelco headquarters in Bahrain's Hamala on Wednesday. This is the largest telecommunications company in the country, which hosts Amazon Web Services.

The attack comes after Tehran said it would strike US companies, from the looks of it Amazon seen to be the first to be targeted.

A week ago, Amazon Web Services in Bahrain and UAE was "disrupted" due to the ongoing West Asia war. It was the second time in a month the operation was impacted. Speaking to news agency Rueters, an Amazon spokesperson said that the drone activity in the region caused the disruption. The aerial strikes in the area have caused structural damage and power failures at several data centres.

Key aspects of the strike

- The Batelco HQ in Bahrain, which houses critical Amazon Web Services cloud infrastructure.
- This attack aligns with Iran's Revolutionary Guard warnings to strike US companies and is considered the first direct hit on a US tech giant's infrastructure in the conflict.
- Reports indicate damage to data centers and disruption to AWS, affecting banking and airline systems.
- The strike occurred following threats from Iran to target US interests, including firms like Google and Meta.
- This incident highlights a shift in strategy, moving from targeting regional energy infrastructure to targeting critical digital infrastructure.

A sensitive site with global linkages

The Hamala facility houses the core operations of Batelco and is linked to regional digital infrastructure, including services associated with Amazon Web Services. That connection has drawn immediate attention. In modern conflicts, data infrastructure is rarely just commercial. It often underpins logistics, communications, and, in some cases, government systems. The distinction between civilian and strategic can blur quickly.

'Will bring 35 nations together to reopen Strait'

LONDON

The UK will host an international diplomatic conference this week on ways to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said.

He further stated that 35 countries have signed a statement committing to work together on restoring maritime security to the key oil transport route. The meeting will "assess all viable diplomatic and political measures that we can take to restore freedom of navigation, guarantee the safety of trapped ships and seafarers and resume the movement of vital commodities", Starmer said.

"Following that meeting, we will also convene our military planners to look at how we can marshal our capabilities and make the strait accessible and safe after the fighting has stopped," he added.

Iranians face tough new restrictions to enter UAE

DUBAI: Iranians have been barred from entering the UAE with only a few exceptions, Dubai-based airlines said, while travel agencies reported high visa rejections for Iranians since the Middle East war began. The restrictions are the latest sign of deteriorating ties between Iran and the UAE, more than a month into Iran's Gulf campaign, which has hit the United Arab Emirates harder than any other country. Emirates and flydubai said on their websites that Iranian nationals were banned from entering the UAE, with the exception of some residents related to Emiratis, families and certain professions. "Nationals of Iran are not allowed to enter and transit," Emirates and flydubai said on their websites. Exemptions apply for UAE residents who are spouses of Emiratis, children of an Emirati woman or "athletes, bank executives, doctors, families, engineers, investors, senior professionals or traders". Reports say a high rejection rate for Iranians visa applicants in the weeks since the start of the war.

TRUMP THREATENS NATO EXIT, SCALING UP TENSIONS WITH ALLIES

PARIS/WASHINGTON

Tensions between the United States and NATO allies flared up as President Donald Trump said he was considering pulling the US out of the military alliance due to its European members' refusing to send ships to unblock the Strait of Hormuz.

NATO, which includes European countries, the United States and Canada, was formed in 1949 with the aim of countering the risk of Soviet attack and has been the cornerstone of the West's security ever since.

Trump's remarks on Wednesday (1 April) came just hours after his Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth declined to reaffirm the US commitment to NATO's collective defence, a concept that lies at the heart of the alliance.

"I was never swayed by NATO. I always knew they were a paper tiger, and (Russian President Vladimir) Putin knows that too, by the way," Trump told Britain's Daily Telegraph, saying he had moved "beyond reconsideration" of US membership.

'US will be out of Iran 'pretty quickly', could return for 'spot hits'

President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that the United States will be "out of Iran pretty quickly" and could return for "spot hits" if needed.

Just hours before he was scheduled to make a prime-time address to the nation, President Trump said one element of his speech would be to express his disgust with NATO for what he considers the alliance's lack of support for US objectives in Iran.

Trump said he is "absolutely" considering withdrawing the United States from NATO, a treaty organisation ratified by the US Senate in 1949.

"They haven't been friends when we needed them," Trump said. "We've never asked them for much ... it's a one-way street."

With the war in its fifth week, Trump is under pressure for an off-ramp amid rising gasoline prices.

When asked in the phone interview with Reuters when the United States would consider the Iran war over, Trump said, "I can't tell you exactly .... we're going to be out pretty quickly."

'Not our war...': British PM defends NATO

LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer Wednesday vowed to act in the UK's best interest amid the ongoing West Asia crisis, despite the pressure on him and the leaders of other NATO nations.

Starmer's remarks come amid about Donald Trump saying he was strongly considering pulling the United States out of NATO.

Addressing a press conference at Downing Street, Starmer said "Let me say once again, this is not our war. We will not be drawn into the conflict that is not in our national interests." "Whatever the pressure on me and others, whatever the noise, I'm going to act in the British national interest in the decisions that I make," Starmer said.04

PM chairs key security meet to safeguard India from war fallout

NEW DELHI

In a significant development amid the ongoing crisis in West Asia, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to review the evolving situation in West Asia and assess its potential impact on India's national interests.

This was the second CCS meeting since tensions escalated on February 28, 2026, following US-Israel airstrikes on Iranian targets and subsequent retaliatory actions, which have led to disruptions in the region, including in the Strait of Hormuz, and volatility in global energy markets.

The meeting, attended by key ministers including Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, focused on energy security, supply chains, and economic stability.

The government reviewed fuel availability, fertiliser supply, and measures to shield citizens from global disruptions, while closely monitoring the geopolitical situation.

Cabinet Secretary Somanathan made a detailed presentation on the global situation and the measures already taken or under consideration by various ministries.

Discussions focused on the short, medium, and long-term implications of the crisis for key sectors, including energy security, petroleum imports, fertilisers, food security, agriculture, MSMEs, exports, shipping, trade, finance, and supply chains.

With nearly one-fifth of global oil trade passing through the Strait of Hormuz, India — which depends significantly on West Asian energy supplies — is assessing potential risks to fuel prices, aviation, and industrial inputs.

The meeting reviewed the current macroeconomic situation and deliberated on both immediate safeguards and long-term strategies to strengthen resilience.

SECOND SUCH MEET IN LESS THAN 10 DAYS

This is the second CCS review held in less than 10 days on the unfolding developments in the region, with the previous one taking place on March 22 over the situation in West Asia amid Iran war.

Amaravati gets legal status as AP's sole capital

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, declaring Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh.

The Bill was cleared by a voice vote. While most parties, including the Congress, supported it, the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) staged a walkout, demanding that a timeline for fulfilling promises made to farmers who contributed land for Amaravati be included in the legislation.

The passage of the Bill comes against the backdrop of a prolonged political dispute over the state capital. After coming to power in 2019, the YSRCP government had halted the development of Amaravati, which was initiated during the previous Telugu Desam Party (TDP) regime following the state's bifurcation in 2014.

In a controversial move, the previous YSRCP government had instead proposed a decentralised governance model with three capitals — Amaravati as the legislative capital, Visakhapatnam as the executive capital, and Kurnool as the judicial capital. This decision was strongly opposed by the farmers who had pooled their fertile land for the construction of the capital.

YSRCP walks out

YSR Congress Party staged a walkout from the Lok Sabha during the debate on the Bill to give statutory status to Amaravati as the sole capital of Andhra Pradesh, terming it as "hopeless" for the people of the state. While making it clear that they are not against Amaravati, YSRCP leader PV Midhun Reddy said the party was opposing the Bill in its present form. He stated that merely naming the capital would serve no purpose and wanted the government to protect the interests of farmers who have given their lands for the development of the state capital.

Replying to the debate, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said the Bill aimed to give effect to an AP Assembly resolution of March 28 requesting the Union government to incorporate Amaravati as the new capital of Andhra Pradesh.

He said it provides statutory clarity regarding the capital of Andhra Pradesh after its bifurcation in 2014. The Bill amends the Section 5 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act 2014, which had mandated that Hyderabad will remain the joint capital of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for a period of 10 years after the bifurcation of AP.

Earlier initiating the debate, Congress Lok Sabha Whip Manickam Tagore said his party fully supports the Bill but demanded that special status be accorded to Andhra Pradesh, which is the successor state of the erstwhile undivided Andhra Pradesh following the creation of Telangana, as promised in Parliament.

"Let Amaravati develop like Bangalore, Chennai or Hyderabad. Let Vishakhapatnam, Tirupati, Kurnool also develop. We support Amaravati as the permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh," he said.

YSR Congress floor leader PV Mithun Reddy said they oppose the Bill as it has no meaning unless the interests of the farmers are protected and a definite timeline is given for compensation to the farmers whose land has been acquired.

BJP MP CM Ramesh said this is the first time in the history of independent India that a Bill has been brought to Parliament to declare a particular place as the capital of a state.

"No one will be able to play" with the capital of Andhra Pradesh as Amaravati will be the sole and permanent capital of the state, he said, as he attacked the previous YSR Congress-led Andhra government that had made plans to have three capitals for the state.

The Bill amends the Section 5 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act 2014, which had mandated that Hyderabad will remain the joint capital of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for a period of 10 years after the bifurcation of the state.

Trump becomes first US sitting Prez to attend SC argument

WASHINGTON

Donald Trump will be the first sitting US President to attend the Supreme Court hearing. The apex court is hearing oral arguments on birthright citizenship. This is also the first executive order that Trump signed when he assumed office for his second term in January 2025. It challenges the 14th Amendment of the Constitution and federal law dating back to 1940. America confers citizenship to everyone born on its soil, with very limited exceptions.

45L kg LPG being produced per day at MRPL: Director

Mangaluru: Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited Director (Refinery) Nandakumar V Pillai said MRPL is running its refineries at 120% of its capacity, and LPG production has been increased by 30%. Speaking during a workshop on "Maritime Adversities and the Role of Stakeholders," organised by the New Mangalore Port Authority in Mangaluru, he said that with the increase in LPG production, MRPL is now producing 45 lakh kg of LPG per day, which is approximately 10 lakh cylinders. "Earlier, we were producing 35 lakh kg per day before the Iran-Israel war," he said. The increase in oil prices in the international market is a major concern. "It was around 69 US dollars per barrel in February, which has now increased to 128 US dollars per barrel. Diesel is the costliest commodity in the international market today," he said.

QUICK READ

Breast Cancer Awareness Workshop Held for Women

Haleyangadi

An awareness workshop on breast cancer for women was successfully conducted in Haleyangadi, bringing together medical experts, community leaders, and local organizations to promote early detection and preventive healthcare. The initiative aimed to educate women on the importance of timely medical attention and healthy practices. The programme was jointly organized by Haleyangadi Mahila Mandal in association with a leading hospital and research centre in Mangaluru. The event took place on March 31 at the Mandal Auditorium and was conducted in collaboration with Sri Vidya Vinayak Yuvaka Mandal and Yuvati Mandal. Mahila Mandal president Reshma presided over the function, while A.J. attended as the chief guest.

Strict Action Warned Against Overpricing of LPG and CNG

Udupi

Authorities in Udupi have issued a stern warning against the sale of LPG and CNG at prices higher than those fixed by oil companies. The directive comes amid rising complaints from consumers about overcharging and irregularities in gas distribution across the district. Deputy Commissioner Swaroopa T K emphasized that LPG and CNG used in vehicles must be sold strictly at government-approved rates. She stated that any deviation from the prescribed pricing would invite strict legal action. The warning follows multiple complaints alleging that gas cylinders were being sold at exorbitant rates, causing inconvenience and financial burden to consumers. Speaking at a review meeting on gas distribution held at the Deputy Commissioner's office auditorium in Manipal, she directed officials and distributors to maintain transparency in their operations.

Water Crisis Looms in Udupi as Baje Dam Levels Drop

Udupi

Udupi district is facing the threat of a looming water crisis as the water levels in Baje Dam, considered the lifeline of the region, continue to decline. The situation has raised serious concerns among residents and authorities, with fears of water shortages intensifying in the coming weeks. he drying up of Baje Dam has emerged as a warning sign for the people of Udupi, which has depended on the reservoir for its water needs for several years. The dam, which has been a crucial source of drinking water, is now struggling due to rapidly depleting water levels, signaling a potential crisis if immediate measures are not taken. Over the past few years, Udupi has witnessed significant growth and urban expansion. The rise in apartment complexes, the development of educational institutions, and the steady growth of tourism have collectively increased the demand for water.

Two Youths Drown After Boat Capsizes in Phalguni River

In a tragic incident reported early Wednesday morning, two young men lost their lives after a small fishing boat capsized in the Phalguni River near Kunjathbail, leaving the local community in shock as authorities continue search operations and investigation.

MANGALURU

According to police officials, the incident occurred under the jurisdiction of Kavoor police station during the early hours of April 1. Three youths identified as Ganesh (28), Royal (24), and Nitesh (29), all residents of Kunjathbail—had set out for fishing in a small country boat at around 1:30 am.

Police sources revealed that when the group reached the middle of the river, their boat suddenly capsized, throwing all three occupants into the water. While Nitesh managed to swim back to safety and reach the riverbank, Ganesh and Royal were unable to save themselves. It has been reported that both victims did not know how to swim, which contributed to the tragic outcome as they were quickly swept away by the river's currents.

Soon after the incident was reported, teams from the Fire and Emergency Services rushed to the spot along with local diving experts to initiate a search and rescue operation. After several hours of effort, the body of Ganesh was recovered from the river by Wednesday afternoon. However, authorities are still continuing their search to locate Royal's body.

The Kavoor police have registered a case and begun a detailed investigation to determine the exact circumstances that led to the accident. Preliminary findings suggest that the boat may have been unstable or overloaded, but officials have stated that further inquiry is required.

The incident has raised concerns about safety measures during late-night fishing activities, particularly regarding the use of small boats and the importance of swimming skills and life-saving equipment.

Absconding Accused Arrested After Nine Years by Urwa Police

MANGALURU

In a significant breakthrough, Urwa police have arrested a man who had been absconding for nearly nine years, successfully evading law enforcement despite multiple cases registered against him.

The arrested individual has been identified as Suhan alias Sonu (33), a resident of Ashok Nagar in Mangaluru. According to police officials, the accused had multiple criminal cases pending against him across different police stations in the region. Two cases were registered against him at Urwa police station in 2016 and 2017, while another case was filed at Mangaluru North police station in 2020. The arrest was made following a coordinated effort by the police team, bringing an end to a long-standing search.

Authorities revealed that in connection with one of the cases registered at Urwa police station, the court had issued a Long Pending Case (LPC) warrant against Suhan after he failed to appear for legal proceedings. Since then, he had reportedly been on the run, frequently changing locations to avoid arrest.

Acting on credible information, a police team led by Assistant Sub-Inspector Lakshman of Urwa police station launched a targeted operation to trace the accused. On March 29, the team successfully tracked him down in Mumbai after sustained surveillance and intelligence gathering. He was immediately apprehended without incident.

Following his arrest, Suhan was brought back and produced before the court. The court has since remanded him to judicial custody. Police officials stated that his arrest marks the culmination of persistent efforts to bring him to justice after years of evasion.

The successful operation highlights the dedication of the police force in pursuing absconding accused individuals and ensuring that they are held accountable under the law. Further investigation into his past activities and pending cases is currently underway.

Interstate Thief Arrested in Temple Burglary Case by Bajpe Police

MANGALURU

In a major breakthrough, Bajpe police have arrested an interstate thief from Tamil Nadu in connection with a temple burglary in Kenjaru village. The accused had allegedly stolen cash from donation boxes after breaking into the shrine, and his arrest has helped police uncover a pattern of similar crimes across regions.

The arrested accused has been identified as Shabik Ahmed Sheikh Abdul Khader (25), a resident of Dindigul district in Tamil Nadu. The theft incident was reported on March 3 at the Shri Ramanjaneya Temple located in Kenjaru village under the jurisdiction of Bajpe police station.

According to police officials, the accused allegedly broke open the temple door during the night, gained entry into the premises, and stole approximately ₹25,000 that had been collected in three donation boxes. Following the incident, a case was registered, and police launched an intensive investigation, treating the matter with high priority.

A special team was constituted to trace the accused. Acting on credible information, the police conducted a raid on March 31, which led to the successful apprehension of the suspect. During interrogation, Shabik reportedly confessed to committing the temple theft. Police also recovered the stolen donation box from his possession, further strengthening the case against him.

Further investigation revealed that the accused was not limited to a single crime. He is believed to have been involved in similar theft cases reported in Udupi and Panambur, pointing towards a larger pattern of interstate criminal activity.

A tragic road accident claimed the lives of a mother and her son after their bike crashed into a stationary tipper, highlighting concerns over roadside safety and unattended heavy vehicles.

Mother and Son Killed After Bike Collides with Stationary Tipper

MOODBIDRI

A tragic road accident claimed the lives of a mother and her son following a collision involving a stationary tipper truck along Mahaveer College Road within the municipal limits of Moodbidri. The incident occurred when a motorcycle traveling from Moodbidri towards Gantalkatte rammed into a tipper lorry that had been parked on the roadside near a petrol bunk, reportedly without adequate warning or safety indicators.

The impact of the collision was severe, leading to the instant death of 68-year-old Prema Shetty at the scene. Her son, 30-year-old Srinivas Shetty, who was riding the motorcycle, sustained critical injuries in the crash. He was rushed to a nearby hospital for emergency treatment but succumbed to his injuries shortly thereafter. The sudden loss of both lives has left the local community in shock and mourning.

Both victims were residents of Neeralkatte in Gantalkatte. Srinivas Shetty was employed as a daily-wage laborer and was known to be the primary breadwinner of the family. Their untimely demise has not only caused emotional devastation but also left the surviving family members facing an uncertain future.

The tragedy is further compounded by the family's recent history of loss. Just last year, Prema Shetty had lost her younger son in a separate road accident involving a rickshaw. The back-to-back incidents have brought immense grief to the family. Another surviving son, who works in a factory in Ganjimat, currently resides with his aunt.

The incident has once again raised serious concerns about road safety, particularly regarding heavy vehicles being parked carelessly on busy roads without proper signage or illumination. Authorities are expected to investigate the circumstances surrounding the accident and take necessary measures to prevent such tragedies in the future.

War of Words Erupts Over Cooking Gas Shortage

MANGALURU

A political controversy has erupted in Mangaluru over the alleged shortage of cooking gas, with sitting MLA Ashok Kumar Rai strongly criticizing former MLA Sanjeeva Matandur for downplaying the issue. The exchange has highlighted growing public concern over supply disruptions and accessibility.

Addressing the media, Ashok Kumar Rai questioned the basis on which former MLA Sanjeeva Matandur claimed that there was no need to worry about a cooking gas shortage. Rai asserted that the ground reality was starkly different, alleging that there was a severe shortage of gas across the region. He urged the former MLA to refrain from making misleading statements, stating that people were facing genuine hardship.

The controversy stems from remarks made by Sanjeeva Matandur, who had earlier assured that there was no cause for concern regarding gas supply. He attributed stability in supply to the leadership of Narendra Modi, expressing confidence that the situation was under control.

However, Rai countered these claims with specific examples. Speaking after a meeting at a temple auditorium, he stated that consumers were currently receiving one gas cylinder only every 35 to 40 days, compared to a normal cycle of about 45 days. He also pointed out that even gas agencies were facing supply issues, mentioning that his own agency had not received stock for several days.

Highlighting the severity of the situation, Rai said that people were forced to stand in long queues outside distribution centers, while several hotels had reportedly shut down due to the lack of cooking gas. He further alleged that there was no gas available in hotels across the region, worsening the situation for both businesses and consumers.

Six Gram Panchayats Selected for National Rural Development Awards

UDUPI

In a significant recognition of excellence in grassroots governance, six gram panchayats from the state have been selected for the prestigious Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grama Vikas Puraskar instituted by the central government. The selection highlights outstanding contributions in rural development, with five of the award-winning panchayats belonging to Udupi district.

The selected gram panchayats include Mudradi and Madamakki from Hebri taluk, Vandse and Hakladi from Kundapur taluk, Sanoor from Karkala, and Halnayakanahalli from Bengaluru. These panchayats have been chosen under different categories based on their performance in key development indicators. Each of them will receive a cash prize ranging from ₹75 lakh to ₹1.50 crore, aimed at further strengthening rural infrastructure and governance.

Mudradi gram panchayat has been awarded under the Poverty-Free and Enhanced Livelihood Panchayat category. The panchayat has made notable progress in promoting self-employment through women's self-help groups, encouraging the use of modern agricultural machinery, and effectively implementing both central and state government schemes. It has also ensured that eligible residents receive pension benefits and that ration distribution reaches 100 percent of beneficiaries.

Madamakki gram panchayat has been recognised for its achievements in sustainable drinking water management. Through the conservation of local water sources and well-planned distribution systems, it has ensured that every household has access to safe and adequate drinking water.

Vandse gram panchayat has received the Health Services Award due to its strong healthcare initiatives. These include efficient functioning of health centres, solid waste management practices, school and anganwadi health programmes, and the organisation of special health camps. A notable initiative has been the introduction of palliative care services for bedridden individuals through the Neeramaya Society.

Hakladi gram panchayat has been honoured under the Social Justice and Social Security category. It has demonstrated effective use of government grants to benefit Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, differently-abled individuals, and other vulnerable sections. The panchayat has also achieved over 80 percent progress across multiple welfare parameters and has implemented employment guarantee schemes efficiently.

ARTIFICIAL LIMB CAMP

MRPL Organizes Artificial Limb Distribution Camp for 36 Beneficiaries

MANGALURU

In a continued effort to support community welfare, Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) organized an Artificial Limb Distribution Camp at the Dakshina Kannada Zilla Panchayat Hall. The initiative, conducted under its Corporate Social Responsibility programme, provided customized assistive devices to dozens of beneficiaries, promoting mobility and independence.

The camp was held in collaboration with the Department for the Empowerment of Differently-Abled and Senior Citizens, which played a key role in identifying eligible beneficiaries. A total of 36 individuals received customized artificial limbs during the programme, aimed at improving their quality of life and enabling greater self-reliance.

The assistive devices were manufactured by FIT WELL, a firm known for producing tailored mobility solutions. The distribution was carried out in a formal ceremony attended by several dignitaries and officials from various departments. Among those present were Ms. Jayalakshmi, Deputy Secretary of the Zilla Panchayat, and Mr. Manish Nayak, an officer from the Department for the Empowerment of Differently-Abled. They were joined by Mr. Prashanth Baliga, Chief General Manager (Administration) of MRPL, Mr. Keshav Patali of MRPL, and Mr. Kishore, proprietor of FIT WELL.

The event witnessed smooth coordination among all stakeholders, ensuring that the assistive devices were distributed efficiently to the beneficiaries. Officials highlighted that such initiatives are crucial in addressing the needs of differently-abled individuals, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have access to such resources.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Prashanth Baliga emphasized MRPL's ongoing commitment to community development through its CSR initiatives. He noted that programmes like these play a vital role in empowering individuals by enhancing their mobility and confidence. He further stressed that enabling beneficiaries to lead independent and dignified lives remains a key focus of the organization's outreach efforts.

The camp stands as a testament to the impact of collaborative efforts between corporate entities and government departments in driving social change. By providing essential assistive devices, MRPL continues to contribute meaningfully toward inclusive development and improved livelihoods for the differently-abled community.

QUICK READ

Retired Bank Official Ashok Kotekar No More

Mangaluru
Ashok Kotekar, who retired as an officer from Dena Bank and lived in Venkataramana Arcade near Ramakanti Talkies in Mangaluru, died at a private hospital in the city on Tuesday night, March 31, after a short period of illness. He had reached the age of 74. He leaves behind his wife, three daughters, and a wide family network. During his long career, Kotekar worked with Dena Bank for about 40 years and remained engaged in numerous social initiatives.

Thieves Break into Cashew Factory Office, Steal Equipment

Belthangady
Thieves broke into the office of a cashew industry at Andinje village by forcing open the rear door. They stole nine computers, eight CCTV cameras, one DVR, three televisions, and important official documents. The total value of the stolen items runs into several lakhs of rupees. T. Varadaraj Pai (46), a resident of Vamadapadavu, lodged a complaint regarding the burglary. A case has been registered at the Venur police station.

Pickup Van Rams into Rear of Private Bus

Bantwal
A rear-end collision occurred at Surikumera Junction near Mani when a pickup van struck the back of a private bus on the morning of March 31. The impact completely crushed the front portion of the pickup vehicle. Fortunately, the driver of the pickup escaped with his life. Local residents point out that vehicles are often driven at dangerously high speeds on the newly widened stretch, making it difficult to maintain control and leading to a rise in such accidents.

Mangaluru Parents Perform Last Rites After Son's Suicide

Mangaluru
The final rites of Sarthak Maurya, a 23-year-old MBBS student who died by suicide after jumping from the 12th floor of an apartment in Attavar, Mangaluru, were carried out in the city. As soon as they learned about their son's death, his parents and relatives arrived in Mangaluru. Overcome with grief for their son, they decided to perform the last rites locally rather than taking the body elsewhere. The procedures were completed at a crematorium in Mangaluru, according to police sources. Sarthak had taken the extreme step on Monday afternoon by jumping from the apartment building.

SW Railway Announces Special Train for Good Friday Weekend Rush

In a timely move to manage the anticipated surge in passenger traffic during the festive weekend, the South Western Railway has announced a special one-trip train service between Yesvantpur and Kannur via Mangaluru Junction.

MANGALURU

In response to the surge in travel demand during the upcoming festive weekend, the South Western Railway has introduced a special one-trip train service connecting key cities between Karnataka and Kerala. The initiative is aimed at easing congestion and ensuring smoother travel for passengers heading home for the Good Friday weekend.

According to the official announcement, Train No. 06551 will depart from Yesvantpur on April 2, 2026, at 11:50 a.m., reaching Kannur in the early hours of April 3 at 3:00 a.m. The return journey,

Train No. 06552, is scheduled to leave Kannur at 8:45 a.m. on April 3 and arrive back at Yesvantpur the same day at 9:30 p.m. This timely arrangement is expected to benefit hundreds of passengers planning short holiday trips or returning to their hometowns.

The special train will pass through several important stations including Kunigal, Channarayapatna, Hassan, Sakleshpur, Subrahmanya Road, Kabaka-Puttur, Bantwal, and Mangaluru Junction, before entering Kerala with stops at Kasaragod, Kanhangad, and Payyannur. This route strategically connects interior Karnataka with coastal regions, making travel more accessible and convenient.

In terms of amenities, the train will feature a balanced coach composition, including two AC 2-tier coaches, six AC 3-tier coaches, seven sleeper class coaches, and four general unreserved coaches. This ensures accommodation for passengers across different budget preferences.

The announcement was shared by the Mysuru division of South Western Railway and further amplified by Dakshina Kannada Member of Parliament Captain Brijesh Chowta. Highlighting the significance of the service, he described it as "good news" for people traveling back home for the festive weekend.

Passengers are advised to visit the official IRCTC Rail Connect platform or website for ticket bookings, seat availability, and real-time updates. The special service is expected to significantly reduce waitlists and provide relief during one of the busiest travel periods of the season.

Grieving Student Appears for SSLC Exam After Father's Death

In a heart-wrenching incident from Konaje, a young student displayed extraordinary courage by appearing for her SSLC examination moments after learning about her father's sudden demise.

MANGALURU

In a deeply moving and emotional incident, a young student from Konaje displayed remarkable strength as she appeared for her SSLC examination shortly after learning about the sudden demise of her father. The incident has drawn attention to the resilience of students who persevere even in the face of personal tragedy.

The student, Fatima Shiza, is the daughter of 63-year-old Sufikunhi K.M., a resident of Kodijal in Konaje village near Ullal. Sufikunhi, a well-known figure in the local community, was engaged in the hotel business and was actively involved in social and educational initiatives. He had served as a member of the School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) of Konaje High School and was also part of the management committee of Kodijal Juma Masjid, earning respect for his contributions to community welfare.

Sufikunhi had been admitted to a hospital for an open-heart surgery following complications related to his heart condition. Despite medical efforts, he passed away in the early hours of Tuesday morning. Tragically, his daughter had already left home for her SSLC examination by the time his body was brought back, unaware of the devastating news that awaited her.

It was only after reaching the examination centre that Fatima was informed about her father's passing. The news left her visibly shaken and overwhelmed with grief. However, in a commendable display of courage, she chose to stay and write her exam. Recognizing the emotional turmoil she was going through, the room invigilator, Meena Gaonkar, provided comfort and support, allowing the student to gather herself and complete her paper.

After finishing the examination, Fatima was immediately sent home to be with her grieving family. Sufikunhi is survived by his wife, one son, and two daughters. The incident stands as a poignant reminder of both the unpredictability of life and the extraordinary resilience shown by individuals during moments of profound loss.

University Presents 2026-27 Budget with Rs 68.34 Cr Deficit

MANGALURU

Mangalore University has tabled a budget showing a deficit of Rs 68.34 crore for the 2026-27 financial year. At the Academic Council meeting held in the Senate Hall under the chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor Prof. P.L. Dharma, the officiating Finance Officer Lalita presented the budget document.

The university has estimated total receipts at Rs 194.09 crore against an anticipated expenditure of Rs 262.43 crore. This marks an increase of Rs 31.36 crore in the deficit compared to the previous year's shortfall of Rs 36.98 crore.

Non-plan income is projected at Rs 133.42 crore. The university expects Rs 19.95 crore under the PM-USHA scheme and has sought Rs 4.09 crore under SCP/TSP schemes. No grants have been released so far for the welfare of scheduled category students. University authorities hope for higher funding from internal resources as well as from the state and central governments compared to last year.If these funds do not materialise, administrative expenses may need to be curtailed.

For development works, the university has requested Rs 89.34 crore from the government while allocating Rs 42.94 crore under the development plan in the budget estimates. Without timely release of grants, implementing these proposals will be difficult.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. P.L. Dharma announced the establishment of a Pension Trust Fund to support retired pensioners. He described it as the first such initiative among state universities.

Separate schools will be created for subjects such as History, Economics and Political Science, as well as for various science and commerce courses. Experienced visiting faculty will be engaged for these schools. Teaching in the first two semesters will be common across courses in each school with a specially designed curriculum, while students will return to their respective courses only from the third and fourth semesters.

The Academic Council recommended affiliation for new courses – BBA in Logistics, BCA in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, and BCA in Data Analytics – at Prestige School of Management in Jeppinamogaru. It also approved the formal closure of Dr. A.V. Baliga Institute of Social and Rural Management at Harady, which has had no admissions since 2014-15.

Registrar Prof. Ganesh Sanjeev and Evaluation Registrar Prof. Devendrappa were present.

Kerala KSRTC Buses Face Toll Delays Due to Non-Functional Fastag

MANGALURU

Non-working Fastag devices on some Kerala KSRTC buses caused significant disruption at the Talapady toll booth on the Kerala-Karnataka border. Toll staff asked bus operators to pay the fee in cash when the electronic system failed. While some bus crews cleared the amount and continued their journey, others became confused and made passengers get down, then shifted them to different buses of their own state fleet waiting on the other side of the toll. According to sources, the affected buses remained stationary in the toll queue for a long time, leading to irritation among other vehicle passengers waiting in line. As per reports, the problem arose because the Fastag bank accounts of some buses were recently shifted to another bank this month, creating temporary glitches in a few cases.

Two Sisters Thrown Out of Moving KSRTC Bus After Door Suddenly Opens

BELTHANGADY

Two girl students sustained injuries after they were thrown out of a moving KSRTC bus in Kaliya village on the Reshme road in Belthangady taluk. CCTV footage captured the frightening moment when two girl students lost balance and fell onto the road from a moving bus due to an unexpected door malfunction.

The sisters had boarded the bus at Gerukatte while travelling from Puttur to Dharmasthala. As the bus took a turn after reaching the Reshme road stretch, its door suddenly swung open. This caused both girls to lose their balance and fall onto the road.

The elder sister fell first, and the younger one tried to hold on to her, but both ended up being thrown out. The entire sequence was recorded on CCTV camera.

The injured students received treatment at a nearby private hospital. They escaped with minor injuries and are out of danger.

Census House Listing Begins in Mangaluru with Speaker's Residence

MANGALURU

The house listing exercise, conducted as a precursor to the full census, received its formal start in Mangaluru.

Mangaluru City Corporation Commissioner Ravichandra Nayak along with enumerators visited the residence of Speaker U.T. Khader at Bhavutagudde. They gathered complete household information, which was recorded entirely through an online system.

Speaking on the occasion, Speaker U.T. Khader described the census as the country's largest national exercise that aims to capture details of every household and citizen across India. He emphasised that accurate data from this process is essential for the nation's overall development planning.

He urged citizens to either upload their household details themselves through the online portal or extend full cooperation by providing accurate information when enumerators visit their homes.

Two More Crude Oil Tankers Dock at New Mangalore Port for Unloading

MANGALURU

The New Mangalore Port received two additional large tankers loaded with crude oil. The vessel named Sunrise Way arrived on Monday carrying 88,152 metric tonnes of crude oil sourced from Mandji in Africa and was engaged in unloading operations at MRPL's single buoy mooring. Another ship, Nagarjuna, which sailed from the Primorsk port in Russia with 97,354 metric tonnes of crude oil, had also reached the single point mooring. Unloading for this cargo was scheduled to begin on April 1. On April 3, one more tanker named Deshbhakt is scheduled to arrive from Rajasthan loaded with 63,171 metric tonnes of crude oil, which will also be supplied to MRPL.

PROBE DEMANDED ON RAI'S DEATH

Parents Demand High-Level Probe into Sudeep Rai Death

MANGALURU

The parents of Sudeep Rai, who recently passed away, have strongly called for a high-level inquiry into the circumstances surrounding their son's death. They claim that mental torture, continuous harassment, and the alleged addition of poison to his food by his wife led to the tragic outcome.

Speaking at a press conference, Sudeep Rai's father, Damodar Nelyadi, stated that the main trigger was a major altercation created by the wife on March 17 at Nelyadi Pete. Following that incident, she

reportedly issued life threats to him and his wife, then took Sudeep away and continued to inflict severe mental agony. His condition deteriorated rapidly, forcing admission to a hospital, where he breathed his last on the morning of March 29.

Another speaker, Venugopal, shared that he too had endured similar mental harassment from the same woman named Soumya. Their own relationship, which had progressed to the stage of marriage last year, ultimately collapsed because of her behavior. Venugopal expressed the belief that had their relationship continued, Sudeep Rai might have been spared his current fate.

He joined the parents in demanding a proper investigation so that justice is served to Sudeep Rai. Sudeep Rai's mother was also present during the press meet.

Two-Month Badminton Summer Camp Inaugurated

MANGALURU

The two-month badminton summer camp organised by the Dakshina Kannada Badminton Association in collaboration with the Karnataka Badminton Association and the Dakshina Kannada unit of the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports was inaugurated at the Urwa Indoor Stadium.

Guruprasad Deep, Chairman of the Sports Development Committee of the Karnataka Badminton Association, formally inaugurated the camp by lighting the lamp. Ashok Poovay, Kadri Ivan Pinto, and Association Vice-President Ashok Hegde were present as chief guests.Committee members including Noor Mohammed also occupied the dais.

On the occasion, talented players aged below 17 years — Sanvi, Aditya, Kiyan P.C., Ananya, Avinash, and Kanish — who have won prizes at state and national levels, were felicitated. Around 90 children have enrolled for the camp.

Association President Santosh Kumar Shetty delivered the welcome address. Secretary Supreetha Alva proposed the vote of thanks, while committee member Dr. Sharath compered the programme.

QUICK READ

State Nursing Council registrar arrested

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A State Nursing Council registrar has been arrested on charges of sexually harassing a woman by forcibly hugging her, kissing her, and touching her private parts. The aggrieved victim has filed a complaint against Registrar Mallu at Upparpet Police Station. He sexually harassed her while working at the Nursing Council office in Gandhinagar. He also sexually assaulted her by touching her genitals and pulling her. He has alleged that he forcibly hugged and kissed her near the car and tried to force her into the car. An FIR was registered at Upparpete police station based on the complaint filed by the victim, and the police have arrested the registrar.

'Memo on services of outsourced employees fake'

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A fake memorandum No. AE/Seni/08/2026 dated 24-03-2026 has been created in the form of the official memorandum of the Finance Department regarding the continuation of the services of outsourced staff in the government and has been circulated on social media. Some media outlets, online editions and social media outlets have published this news without checking the authenticity. No such order or official memorandum has been issued by the government, and this fake memorandum is not official, said M Rajamma, Under Secretary to the Government of the Finance Department, in a statement.

Summer camp for kids above 4 years in Hoskote

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Shree Samskruthika Kala Academy, Hoskote, is conducting Summer Camp for kids aged above 4 years till April 30. Innovative activities such as Math and core concept learning, calligraphy, dance and music, science fun, yoga, arts and crafts, indoor fun games, shlokas and bhajans, storytime and drama, gardening along with brain boosting activities. For details contact 8904645581.

10 more GTTCs to meet tech edu demand

The Skill Development Department has announced plans to establish 10 new GTTCs at an estimated ₹60 crore each

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Tool and Training Centres (GTTCs) provides training, research and development, production, and consultancy services to support industrial growth and emerging sectors. Beginning with one in Bengaluru, GTTCs have grown to 31 across the state.

The proposed additions will take the total number to 41.

Official data shows admissions across seven specialised diploma courses have shown a steady rise. In 2023-24, total intake stood at 2,669 seats, with 3,100 students enrolling.

The following year, intake increased to 5,390 seats, accommodating 3,687 admissions. By 2025-26, intake reached 6,050 seats, with 5,729 students enrolling. An official said the difference in intake and admissions is due to mismatch of expectations vs curriculum, financial and personal constraints, awareness, and academic preparedness. Over the past three years, Diploma in Tool & Die Making recorded the highest enrolment, with 5,327 students.

In contrast, automation and robotics offered across six centres, saw the lowest enrolment at 514 students. Most students are aged between 14 and 18, typically having completed Class 10 or 12. Traditional courses like Diploma in Tool and Die making continue to attract over 1,000 students annually, but newer streams like artificial intelligence and machine learning, offered in seven centres, are witnessing growing interest.

Neeti Sharma, CEO, TeamLease Digital, said, with the expansion of manufacturing, semiconductor, EV, and green energy sectors, the curriculum must evolve to prepare students for tomorrow's industries, not just today's. Awareness campaigns and student counselling are crucial to ensure students understand opportunities, which will enhance employment prospects. Faculty engagement, and updated curricula will help build a skilled, ready workforce.

Nikita Bengani, Director, Youth Program at Quest Alliance, said, awareness and accessibility remain key barriers, especially for disadvantaged youth who are often unaware of career opportunities technical training offers. Distance, living costs, and lack of hostel or transport facilities also discourage enrolment, while safety and family confidence influence young women's participation. Skilled trainers, effective mentorship, and modern learning environments are also crucial to keeping students engaged and ensuring successful outcomes. Besides AI-driven robotics and human-machine interfaces, the department plans to introduce courses in chip testing, photonics assembly, and smart factory operations. Plans are also underway to boost admissions through industry collaborations, scholarships, and student support schemes.

State to remove tax exemption, e-cars to get costlier

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Buying an electric car in Karnataka may soon get costlier with the state government preparing to withdraw 100 percent road tax exemption currently given for battery-operated cars. However, tax exemptions for electric two-wheelers will continue.

The move comes at a time when India is ramping up electric mobility amid fears of a likely fuel price hike stoked by West Asia conflict.

The proposal, part of Karnataka Motor Vehicles Taxation Amendment Bill 2026 passed in the recently concluded legislature session, is awaiting the governor's assent to become law. The one-time tax is paid while purchasing a new vehicle.If the proposal goes through,

then lifetime tax will be linked to the cost of the car: Electric cars priced up to Rs 10 lakh could attract a 5 percent tax, while those in the Rs 10 lakh-25 lakh bracket may be taxed at 8%. Vehicles priced above Rs 25 lakh are already subject to a 10% tax, and there's no change in the tax matrix.

For perspective, a Rs 20-lakh car would attract Rs 1.6 lakh in tax. Defending the move, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said the tax will apply only to new vehicles and not retrospectively.

The policy pivot comes as the govt looks to shore up revenues amid rising expenditure on its flagship guarantee schemes. For 2026-27, the transport department was given a target of Rs 15,500 crore, Rs500 crore higher than the previous fiscal. Officials estimate that taxing electric cars across segments could generate Rs 259 crore annually. This marks a significant departure from Karnataka's policy on tax exemption for electric vehicles. To promote green mobility, in 2016, the government announced tax exemption for EVs to accelerate adoption. In May 2024, the government decided to bring luxury e-cars under the tax net by imposing a 10 percent lifetime tax on high-end electric cars.

The latest proposal extends levy taxes on all variants of electric cars. Dealers have started alerting customers about a likely increase in on-road prices, including those who have made advance bookings.

Muzrai Dept moots adoption plan to revive small temples

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The state Muzrai department is planning to introduce an adoption model for thousands of low-income temples while promoting temple tourism. This is part of the efforts to improve infrastructure and generate sustainable revenue.

Official data shows a stark skew in terms of fund allocation to temples: In 2025-26, Rs 85 lakh was allocated to two Group A temples, which works out to about Rs 42.5 lakh for each. In contrast, Rs 9 crore was earmarked for 111 Group C temples, which comes to only about Rs 8.1 lakh per temple. The proposal seeks to correct this imbalance, too. Under the adoption model, ownership of temple properties will remain with the govt, but facilities such as guest houses, parking and other amenities for devotees could be developed through private participation.

The department has undertaken an exercise to identify government temples and land attached to them, with the focus being on Group C temples. Of the 34,566 notified temples in the state, nearly 90% fall under Group C, with each earning less than Rs 5 lakh annually on an average. A vision group that met last week discussed ways to enhance income while preserving and popularising these temples. A report is being prepared for expert review.

Rajender Kataria, the vice-chairman of Dharmik Parishad, said smaller temples have long lacked structured management despite their widespread presence. Group A and B temples have their own income and committees, but Group C temples lack proper management, he said, adding that there are no clear adoption guidelines for these temples. An adoption system could support small temples with significant historical value, he added.

SPARSH Hospital manages mass casualty influx after industrial fire

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

When industrial fires occur, many people are fighting for their lives due to fatal burns, and the coordinated treatment of Sparsh Hospital is an example of how the coordinated efforts of specialist doctors and nurses from various departments of the hospital can save lives, said Jasdeep Singh, COO of Sparsh Hospital.

Speaking at a press conference held at Sparsh Hospital in Rajarajeshwari Nagar, he said that the multidisciplinary team of Sparsh Hospital is always ready to treat such emergencies. The availability of emergency treatment and rapid response are equipped to allow a large number of burn victims to receive treatment and recover under one roof, which will come in handy in cases of serious cases like fire accidents.

Dr Ranjan Shetty, Group Medical Director, Sparsh Hospitals, said that managing a large number of patients suffering from severe burns simultaneously reflects the organizational preparedness, commitment of the experienced team, as well as the comprehensive infrastructure of the ICU. He opined that continuous investment in the ever-ready team of experts and systems will enable the speedy recovery of patients with such successful treatment.

Recently, after an industrial fire incident that occurred in the evening at a textile design and printing factory on Mysore Road, five people with severe burn injuries were successfully treated at Sparsh Hospital RR Nagar and the patients have recovered. He said that this is an example of the hospital's preparedness to handle high-intensity mass-casualty emergencies.

Immediately after the fire incident, the patients were initially given first-level emergency care at a nearby hospital and then transferred to Sparsh Hospital RR Nagar in critical condition. The injuries were severe and critical in nature. There were burns on the face, hands and back. One of the injured was in a situation where it was difficult to survive due to smoke in the breathing tube (trachea).

Since burn injuries can cause severe infections, 21 trained nurses will be fully engaged in the care of these five patients.

Couple's suicide: woman's kin unaware of marriage

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A young techie couple who had moved from Hyderabad to Bengaluru died by suicide within minutes of each other at their apartment in the city's Kothanur area, police said. Investigators said the husband, Bhanu Chander Reddy (32) was found dead inside a locked bedroom on Tuesday morning.

His wife, Bibi Shaziya Siraj (31) died shortly afterwards after jumping from the 18th floor of the same apartment complex. Police said Shaziya had returned home from her night shift at around 7.30 am and raised the alarm when her husband did not respond. She contacted the building's security staff, telling them the bedroom door was locked from inside. Guards broke open the door and found Reddy's body. A suicide note was recovered from a table.

According to police, Shaziya remained at the scene briefly as neighbours gathered and calls were made to emergency services.

RGUHS to celebrate International Women's Day with dignitaries today

BENGALURU

The Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS), Karnataka, will celebrate International Women's Day 2026 with a special event at the Dhanvantri Auditorium on April 2 at 11 am.

Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, Chief Secretary to the Government of Karnataka, will be the chief guest, while Mohammed Mohsin, Additional Chief Secretary to the Department of Health and Family Welfare (Medical Education), will attend as guest of honour.

Dr. B. L. Sujatha Rathod, Director of Medical Education, and Padma Shri awardee Dr. Prema Dhanraj, a renowned plastic and reconstructive surgeon, will be among the distinguished guests. The programme will be presided over by Dr. Bhagavan B. C., Vice Chancellor of RGUHS.

As part of the celebrations, women achievers from various faculties of the university will be honoured. Members of the Syndicate, Senate, Academic Council, and Board of Studies have been invited to attend the event.

Hotel guest told to pay over Rs 16L for not paying dues

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A guest who checked into a hotel on Palace Road for a short stay ended up enjoying its hospitality for 63 days in a suite, and nearly 196 days overall, without clearing his dues. The dispute over prolonged stay finally landed in court, which ordered him to pay the full outstanding amount along with interest.

The saga began on March 27, 2025, when Radisson Blu Atria allotted a room to Mohamad Rafeeque Pallivalappil, a 65-year-old resident of Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh, and Managing Director of Online Farms Gate India Pvt Ltd, Kochi, at a tariff of Rs 5,737.5 per day plus GST. At his request, the hotel upgraded his stay to the more expensive suite on August 6, 2025. The revised tariff was communicated through phone calls and WhatsApp messages, and the guest continued to occupy the suite.While an initial payment of Rs 80,000 was made, the guest soon became irregular in clearing the room rent.

Despite repeated reminders and demands from the hotel management, he neither cleared the mounting dues nor vacated the premises.

GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

KSRTC receives World HRD Congress Award

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has been selected for the prestigious World HRD Congress Award 2026 under the category "Best in Training and Organisation Development" in recognition of its exemplary training initiatives.

Across its five training centres, KSRTC has been implementing a wide range of structured training programmes, including fuel efficiency, refresher training, accident-free driving, road safety, and simulator-based training.

Under the PM Ajay Scheme, heavy vehicle driving training along with free driving licence issuance is being provided to Scheduled Caste candidates in collaboration with the Transport Department. Similarly, in association with the Directorate of Minorities, light and heavy vehicle driving training along with free driving licences is being provided to candidates from minority communities.

In addition, driving training is offered to private candidates, while newly recruited driver-cum-conductors, technical staff, KST Constable, and junior assistants are provided with induction training covering job responsibilities and duties. Special training programmes are conducted for supervisory staff, and driving instructors are deployed to units to train driving personnel. Refresher training is also provided to administrative staff along with several other capacity-building programmes.

Over the past six months, more than 12,000 staff have been trained, and considering the effectiveness and impact of these training initiatives on organisational development, KSRTC has been selected for the World HRD Congress Award 2026 under "Best in Training and Organisation Development".

At the award ceremony held in Cochin, Captain ST Sreedharan, Director, College of Ship Technology, presented the award to the Corporation.

Dr TS Latha, Board Secretary and Chief Public Relations Officer, along with AS Geethanjali, Principal, Regional Training Institute, Hassan, received the award on behalf of KSRTC.

QUICK READ

Vandals attack teen's grave, family outraged

Shivamogga

In Shivamogga, vandals partially destroyed the grave of 10th-grade student Sanketh, who was murdered last month. The attack took place at the Hindu cemetery near Maradi Siddeshwara Hill in Solebailu. Sanketh's family had recently built a granite memorial and performed prayers on March 28. His father, Shivakumar, expressed deep grief, demanding justice for those responsible. Local MLA Channabasappa condemned the act, urging police to catch both the vandals and anyone encouraging such behavior. Authorities have begun investigating. The incident has shocked the community, highlighting the need for stronger protection of memorials and respect for victims' families.

Raichur woman found dead, family alleges murder

Raichur

A 30-year-old woman, Vidya alias Sudhiksha, a programme assistant at the city's science centre, was found dead under suspicious circumstances in Raichur. Her family alleges dowry harassment and claims she was strangled by her husband Manjunath and mother-in-law, though the death was initially presented as suicide. Sudhiksha had reportedly complained about harassment just four months into her marriage. A case has been registered at West Police Station, and the body has been sent to RIMS Hospital for postmortem. DySP Shantaveer and Tahsildar Parashuram inspected the site. The grieving family demands justice and strict action against the accused.

Cylinder explosions cause panic, families escape harm

Bengaluru

In Bengaluru's Laggere, five family members narrowly escaped death when a leaking gas cylinder exploded while being replaced, destroying their first-floor home. Firefighters quickly controlled the fire, and Rajagopalanagar police filed a case. In a similar incident in Hassan's K. Allur, another family of five, including a woman and her son, suffered injuries from a cylinder blast during replacement. They are now recovering at Konanur Community Health Center. Both accidents caused major property damage and raised concerns about gas safety. Authorities have urged residents to exercise caution during cylinder handling and installation to prevent such dangerous incidents.

BJP MP MOCKS GOVT OVER IPL TICKETS

Karnataka's government sparked controversy by securing three complimentary IPL tickets for every MLA, drawing sharp mockery from the opposition

BENGALURU

A political row has broken out in Karnataka after Deputy CM DK Shivakumar announced that all state MLAs will receive complimentary tickets for Indian Premier League (IPL) matches. The decision, which gives each lawmaker three tickets per game, was met with sharp sarcasm from BJP MP Tejasvi Surya, who mocked the move as the government's "biggest achievement."

The controversy began when the state government confirmed it had negotiated with the Karnataka State Cricket Association and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to secure the passes. Reacting to the news, Surya took to social media to "congratulate" the Chief Minister and his deputy for successfully concluding such a "complex negotiation." He jokingly called it a "historic day" that would supposedly benefit all six crore people of Karnataka.

Taking his wit further, the MP suggested that the government's expert negotiation skills should now be used to solve global crises, such as the conflicts between Russia-Ukraine and Iran-Israel. His comments highlight the opposition's view that the government is focusing on perks for politicians rather than addressing more pressing public issues.

According to the new arrangement, MLAs will not only get tickets for the T20 league but will also receive special passes for upcoming international cricket fixtures. While the government defends the move as a standard coordination with sports stakeholders, critics argue that such privileges are unnecessary. As fans struggle to buy tickets for the sold-out matches, the sight of guaranteed seats for politicians has sparked a heated debate across the city.

New Air India express flights from Mangaluru

MANGALURU

Air India Express has announced a significant expansion of its flight schedule from Mangaluru, introducing new daily connections to Sharjah and increased frequency to Delhi. According to a recent press release, the airline is launching these routes to ensure stable travel options amidst the ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia.

The new daily service between Mangaluru and Sharjah (Flight IX 6057) is scheduled to depart Mangaluru at 1:25 PM, arriving in Sharjah at 4:05 PM local time. The return flight will leave Sharjah at 5:05 PM and land back in Mangaluru by 10:30 PM. This consistent daily schedule is designed to provide reliable connectivity for the large number of expatriates and business travelers who frequently move between the coastal city and the Gulf.

In addition to the international route, the airline is boosting its domestic presence with new flights to the national capital. On Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays, the Mangaluru-Delhi flight (IX 1992) will depart at 9:30 AM. For the remainder of the week, flight IX 1276 will handle the route, departing Mangaluru at 8:30 AM and reaching Delhi by 11:45 AM.

Air India Express expanded its Mangaluru schedule, adding daily Sharjah flights and increased Delhi frequency to provide stable travel options amid West Asian geopolitical tensions

These changes are part of a strategic move to optimize the airline's network during a period of global uncertainty. By offering both morning and afternoon slots, Air India Express aims to cater to both corporate commuters and leisure travelers. Passengers are advised to check the latest timings on the airline's website, as these schedules are currently set through the end of the month.

BJP President B.Y. Vijayendra accused Chief Minister Siddaramaiah of deceiving North Karnataka farmers over unpaid Almatti dam compensation promises

BJP leader slams CM over broken promises

BAGALKOT

BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra launched a blistering attack on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, accusing the Congress government of deceiving farmers in North Karnataka. Speaking to reporters during a high-stakes campaign in Bagalkot, Vijayendra claimed the state has failed to deliver on massive compensation promises made to families affected by the Almatti dam project.

At the heart of the dispute is the plan to raise the dam's height, which will submerge vast areas of farmland. According to Vijayendra, the government promised four months ago to pay farmers ₹40 lakh per acre for irrigated land and ₹30 lakh for dry land. However, the BJP leader alleges that these figures remain only on paper. "The government must disclose exactly how much of this money has actually reached the farmers," he demanded.

Vijayendra also questioned the status of the Upper Krishna Project, a vital irrigation scheme for the region. He mocked the government's recent announcement of a "special cabinet session" to discuss these issues, labeling it a political stunt rather than a sincere effort to help. He challenged the Chief Minister to show the real fund allocations instead of making "hollow speeches" during election season.

The row comes at a sensitive time as by-elections approach, with both parties fighting for the support of the influential farming community. As the war of words intensifies, local farmers remain caught in the middle, waiting for the life-changing compensation they were promised. For Vijayendra, the lack of progress is clear proof that the current administration is "anti-farmer."

New rural job scheme sparks alarm

BENGALURU

Karnataka's Rural Development Minister, Priyank Kharge, raised serious alarms as the Centre's new rural employment scheme, VB-G RAM G, officially replaced the long-standing MNREGA. The Minister criticized the Union Government for launching the program without providing clear operational guidelines, leaving states in a state of confusion on the very day the transition began.

Kharge highlighted several "critical gaps" in the new system, which stands for Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission. He pointed out that there is currently no clarity on how funds will be allocated or how Gram Panchayats will be classified. Most concerning, he noted, is that the transition is happening during the peak summer season—a time when rural demand for manual labor and steady wages is at its highest.

The Minister also attacked the structural changes of the law, alleging they undermine the legal rights of workers. He

specifically called out a new "60-day pause" in work during agricultural seasons, arguing it will leave millions of laborers without any income during difficult months. Furthermore, Kharge claimed the state's financial burden has jumped to 40%, calling the move "anti-federal" and a strain on local resources.

Under the old MNREGA, work was a legal right, but Kharge fears the new "supply-driven" model strips local village councils of their autonomy and decision-making power. While the Centre promises a transformation of rural India, the Minister warned that the current lack of transparency threatens the survival of the country's most vulnerable workers.

Digital census 2027 kicks off in Chitradurga

CHITRADURGA

India's massive 2027 Census officially began its first phase in Chitradurga, marking a historic shift toward a digital-first headcount. District Principal and Sessions Judge Rona Vasudev and Deputy Commissioner T. Venkatesh inaugurated the "house-listing" process by recording their own household details online, urging the district's 1.8 million residents to follow suit.

For the first time, the government has opened a "self-enumeration" window from April 1 to April 15. During these two weeks, citizens can skip the initial paperwork by visiting the official census portal at https://se.census.gov.in. After a simple mobile OTP verification, residents can register details about their home construction, water facilities, and basic amenities from the comfort of their smartphones or computers.

Deputy Commissioner Venkatesh explained that this 15-day digital window is designed to make the process faster and more accurate. Once the online phase ends, census officials will begin door-to-door physical visits starting April 16 to verify the data and assist those who could not register online. The drive was launched simultaneously across all six taluks of the district with full administrative support.

City Municipal Council Commissioner S. Lakshmi reminded the public that the census is the primary roadmap for India's future development and welfare planning. She urged citizens to be courteous to visiting officers and provide precise information. This high-tech approach aims to make the 2027 Census the most efficient and technologically advanced in the nation's history, ensuring no household is left behind in the digital era.

Thousands gather for grand ratha yatra in Magadi

MAGADI

The historic town of Magadi was transformed into a sea of devotion, as lakhs of pilgrims gathered for the grand Brahma Rathotsava of the renowned Tirumale Sri Ranganathaswamy. Drawing devotees from across Karnataka and neighboring states.

As the massive wooden chariot began its journey, the air resonated with thunderous chants of "Govinda... Govinda..." Pilgrims lined the streets, throwing bananas and fragrant herbs toward the sacred kalasa atop the ratha as a mark of devotion. For this special occasion, the deity was adorned with a magnificent diamond-studded golden crown, a sight that left many spellbound.

Participating in the rituals, MLA H.C. Balakrishna highlighted the temple's deep historical roots, noting its significance since the era of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda.

"This temple serves as a sacred alternative for those unable to travel to Tirupati," the MLA remarked. "A darshan here is believed to grant equal spiritual merit."

To support the growing number of visitors, the MLA announced that ₹5 crore worth of development projects are currently under tender, with a request for an additional ₹5 crore for a complete renovation of the temple complex.

The 2km stretch leading to the temple was lined with community-organized food centers (Annadasoha) and buttermilk distribution points to help devotees manage the afternoon heat. High-profile attendees included Nanjavadhoota Swamiji, former Minister H.M. Revanna, and former MLA A. Manjunath. To manage the massive crowds, police enforced strict security and organized systematic parking at Gandhi Circle and Tirumale Gate, ensuring the historic event concluded peacefully.

Lokayukta demands faster action on public complaints

CHIKKABALLAPUR

Justice K.N. Phaneendra, the Karnataka Upalokayukta, sent a clear message to government officials stop making people wait. Speaking at a special meeting at the Zilla Panchayat hall, he warned that stalling public applications is not just a mistake, but a serious failure of duty that will lead to legal trouble.

The session was held to tackle 73 stuck cases from local areas, including Gauribidanur and Gudibanda. Most problems involved land records and rural development. Justice Phaneendra didn't just talk; he took action. Most of these long-standing issues were settled right on the spot, bringing instant relief to frustrated citizens who had been caught in red tape.

The judge reminded the gathered officers that their jobs exist to serve the people, not to create hurdles. He gave them a simple rule: if a request comes in, check it immediately. If it is your job, fix it. If it belongs to another office, guide the person there instead of sending them away empty-handed.

"Citizens come to you for their legal rights, not for a fight," he said, urging a change in how the government treats the public. He called for a fresh pledge of honesty, insisting that government help must reach those who truly need it without any outside pressure or bribery. High-ranking leaders, including the Deputy Commissioner and the Police Superintendent, attended the event to ensure these new standards are met immediately.

FUEL CRISIS

Drivers union demands relief from gas shortage

BENGALURU

A delegation of drivers led by Union President S. Dadafir met with the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board today to address the crippling fuel crisis. Drivers across the state are facing severe financial losses as shortages of LPG and CNG force them to spend days searching for fuel instead of earning a living.

The union submitted a formal request to Chairman S. E. Sudheendra, explaining that many drivers can no longer support their families due to the constant wait times at filling stations. They urged the government to increase the number of gas outlets to keep up with the rising demand.

In response, Chairman Sudheendra assured the group that the Chief Minister is personally monitoring the situation every day to restore the supply. He shared some hopeful news: while the state has already ordered new biodiesel outlets, a proposal to set up more gas retail stations will be sent to the Chief Minister immediately for quick action.

The Board is also pushing for a long-term solution through a new bioenergy policy. This plan aims to boost local production of biofuels like compressed biogas, which would prevent these shortages from happening again. General Secretary Ashok and other union leaders attended the meeting, expressing cautious optimism that a permanent fix is finally on the horizon. For thousands of drivers, these promised fuel stations cannot come soon enough to save their livelihoods.

QUICK READ

Young Vijayapura leader joins BJP Party

Vijayapura

Nandu Gadgi, a young leader and close associate of Vijayapura City MLA Basanagouda Patil, officially joined the BJP at the Bagalkot BJP office. The event was attended by BJP state president B.Y. Vijayendra, former minister Appasaheb Pattanashetty, and Vijayapura City Mandal president Sandeep Patil. Gadgi received the party flag from senior leaders and expressed admiration for Prime Minister Modi and Vijayendra's leadership. He pledged to work sincerely for the party's growth in the district. BJP leaders welcomed him warmly, saying his joining will strengthen the party's presence and engagement in Vijayapura.

Vijayapura book fair posters released

Vijayapura

Posters for the Bijapur Buddha, Basava, Babasaheb Ambedkar Book Fair were unveiled at Durbar High School grounds in Vijayapura. The event is scheduled from April 10 to 14. District Collector Dr. Anand K. encouraged residents, literature lovers, and readers to attend and support the fair. Several members of the May Sahitya Balaga, including Chennu Kattimani, Somu Randevi, Shivaraj Kattimani, and Appu Chinagundi, were present at the launch. Organizers said the fair will showcase a wide range of books and aim to promote reading culture in the district. The community is invited to join and celebrate literature.

Software sector boosts India's GDP growth

Dr. Parameshwar highlighted India's tech growth, engineers' efforts, and AI's role in responsibly boosting development and efficiency

TUMAKURU

The software industry plays a major role in driving India's economic growth and contributing significantly to the country's GDP, said Karnataka Home Minister and Chancellor of Sahe University Dr. G. Parameshwar.

He was speaking after inaugurating the "IQAM" alumni meet held at Sri Siddhartha Institute of Engineering in Katsandra on the outskirts of Tumakuru.

Dr. Parameshwar said that India is competing strongly with developed nations mainly due to rapid growth in the technology and software sector. He added that engineers are working continuously to turn development goals into reality and strengthen the vision of a "strong India."

He also highlighted the growing influence of artificial intelligence, stating that AI will play a key role in shaping the future. He said that adopting new technologies responsibly will help increase efficiency and development speed across sectors.

The minister noted that governments plan for the future keeping the next generation in mind, but expressed concern that youth are increasingly getting distracted. He said efforts must be made to guide young people back towards positive paths, or it could affect the future of society.

Calling alumni the "brand ambassadors" of institutions, he said former students play an important role in enhancing the global reputation of colleges. He encouraged alumni to stay connected and contribute ideas for the development of their institutions every year.

The event also saw alumni sharing nostalgic memories of their college days. Principal Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, coordinator Rekha, and several alumni including Navdeep Kaur, Chandrashekhar, Chetan, Kiran and Srinivas Murthy attended the program along with faculty members from various departments.

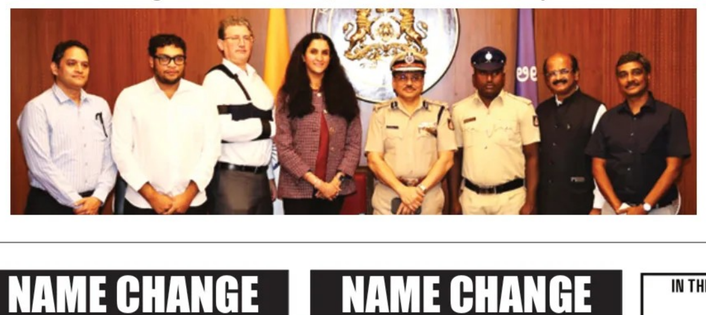
Police hero honoured for saving life on tracks

BENGALURU

In a remarkable recognition of bravery and quick thinking, Sridhar Murthy has been awarded the Good Samaritan Award by HOSMAT Hospitals for saving a man's life on railway tracks near RMZ Galleria in Bengaluru.

The award was presented by HOSMAT Hospitals, known for its expertise in trauma and emergency care, to honour individuals who act swiftly in life-threatening situations and help save lives during the critical "golden hour."

According to officials, Murthy was on Cheetah patrol duty when he received a control room alert about a man attempting suicide on the railway tracks. He immediately rushed to the spot, found the 38-year-old man in an intoxicated state, and pulled him away just minutes before an approaching train could reach him.



Not only did he rescue the man, but he also provided immediate counselling and emotional support, ensuring the individual's safety and stability after the incident.

HOSMAT Hospitals said the award was instituted in 2001 in memory of its founder Dr. Thomas Chandy to recognise citizens who show courage and compassion in emergency situations. The institution noted that timely intervention can significantly reduce fatalities, especially during road and rail accidents.

Speaking at the event, Managing Director Anisha Chandy Eckardt said that saving lives is a shared responsibility and praised Murthy's courage and empathy, calling him an example of true public service. The hospital also highlighted past recipients from different walks of life, including police personnel, drivers, students and public figures who have helped save lives during emergencies.

Murthy's act has been widely appreciated as a reminder that quick action and humanity can make the difference between life and death in critical moments.

Self-enumeration open to citizens for Census 2027

MANDYA

Census 2027 introduces self-enumeration for faster data collection. Residents answer 33 questions online at www.se.census.gov.in and receive a reference ID for verification

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar has urged the public to actively participate in the self-enumeration process for Census 2027, which has been made available through a secure online portal.

He said that citizens in the district can complete their census details online between April 1 and April 15, 2026, before the door-to-door enumeration begins on April 16.

The self-enumeration facility has been introduced as part of Census 2027 to make the process faster and more convenient for the public. Residents can log in to the official website www.se.census.gov.in and answer 33 questions related to household and housing details.

After successful submission, a reference ID will be generated and sent to the registered email or system portal. This ID must be shown to the enumerator when officials visit homes during the physical verification process.

Officials explained that providing the reference ID will help avoid repetition of questions during the survey and will speed up the overall census process. If the ID is not available, enumerators will have to collect all details again from the beginning.

Dr. Kumar appealed to citizens to make use of this opportunity and complete their self-enumeration within the given time frame. He said that public participation is essential for accurate data collection, which will help in planning development programs and resource allocation.

He further stated that the census is an important exercise that supports decision-making in sectors such as health, education, housing and infrastructure.

The district administration expects a large number of residents to participate and contribute to the success of Census 2027 through this digital initiative.

Hanagal MLA launches development works in village

HANAGAL

MLA Srinivas Mane inaugurated several development projects in Kudala village, emphasizing the state government's commitment to economic security and social welfare for citizens.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony, Mane highlighted efforts to support the public amid rising prices of essential goods. He said the government is prioritizing universal basic income concepts through various guarantee schemes to provide financial stability and social protection for all.

The projects include the construction of a CC road at a cost of Rs. 20 lakh under the Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Programme (CMIDP) for 2025-26. Mane noted that the taluk has already received Rs. 50 crore under CMIDP this year, and an additional Rs. 25 crore is expected soon. Once the funds are released, development works will be carried out based on the suggestions of village headmen and residents, with urgent projects given priority.

The event was attended by several leaders, including Block Congress President Hanumanthappa Maragadi, KPCC member Talkanagowda Patil, and community leaders Fakkiresh Mavinamard, Suresh Soppina, Prabhu Bammannavara, Mallikarjuna Karjagi, Balaraj Valmiki, Veeresh Badigera, and Shankrappa Haravi, among others.

Officials said the initiative aims to improve basic infrastructure, enhance public services, and strengthen local development, ensuring that the community benefits from timely and efficient government support.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as **SYED SALAUDDIN** alias **NAZEEM PASHA**, S/O PYARAJAN, R/o- No 2 Noha Street Hkp Road Hamza Hotel Shivajinagar Bangalore, karnataka- 560001, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as **NAZEEM PASHA.**

NAME CHANGE

I, ABBAS BIN YAKOOB SYEDA, resident of No: 33, 3 rd Main Road, Williams Town, Bangalore North Bangalore – 560046. Have changed my name to **SYED ABBAS,** vide affidavit dated: 01.04.2026, before Notary G DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, NASEERUDDIN, S/o Ahmed Khan, Aged About 42 Years, resident of No: 4, No:31 / 1, 3rd Floor, Limar Residency, T Dasarahalli, Bangalore – 560057. Have changed my name to **NASEERUDDIN AHMED KHAN,** vide affidavit dated: 01.04.2026, before Notary G DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.

Document Lost

Sriranganayak S/o M.G. Guru, resident of: Magadi Town, Tatavalu Road, Kalagate, Bangalore South District, in respect of the plot of land No. 1621-55B, Vidyanagar, Municipality Area, Magadi Town, Bangalore South District, K.N. Jayashankar, son of Nagarajaiah, resident of Kalya village, Kasaba, Hobli, Magadi taluk, has registered a purchase deed on our behalf, the purchase deed number of which is B-1 4673/14-15. 245/14/47/71 The purchase deed was lost on the way to Magadi Bus Stand on 24-03-2026. If found, please contact the above address or mobile number immediately: 9980877890 or contact Advocate: Lakshmi Prasad, Advocate, Magadi, Mobile No.: 9743828060.

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client Smt, Jabeena W/o Noorulla, Residing at Abbihalli Village, Thayaluru Village Pancahayth, Thayaluru Hobali, Mulabagal Taluk, Kolar District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property, while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy ,have lost following Documents of property pertating to below Mentioned property Situated at Abbihalli Village, Thayaluru Village Pancahayth, Thayaluru Hobali, Mulabagal Taluk, Kolar District, had published the factum of lost of her Original Regd Sale Deed, Dated;-24-05-2008, Regd Sale Deed Executed by Smt, Eramma w/o Late, Venkatappa, and his family Members, in Favour of Smt, Jabeena W/o Noorulla, In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.MBL-1-00361/2008-09, IN CDNO. MBLD 20, In regd before of the SRO Mulabagal ,in Respect of Property Bearing Mulabagal taluk, Thayaluru Hobali, Dhulapalli Village Pancahayth, Abbehalli Village, Demand Register no.23/22, in Measuring 30x60 Feets, police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2134663/2026, DATED;-01-04-2026, and complaint dated;-01-04-2026, by respective person, if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.
Place;-Chinthamani,
Date;-01-04-2026
K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI.M;-9980110692

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client Sri.Shankar T M S/o Munivenkatappa, Residing at Anehalli Village, Kappalamadugu Village Panchayath, Kasaba Hobali, Mulabagalu Taluk, Kolar District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property, while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy ,have lost following Documents of property pertating to below Mentioned property Situated at Anehalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Kappalamadugu Village Panchayath, Kasaba Hobali, Mulabagalu Taluk, Kolar District, had published the factum of lost of her Original Regd Sale Deed, Dated;- 25-04-2005, Regd Sale Deed to be executed By Sri. P C Subramani S/o P R Chowdappa, in favour of Sri. Narayanappa S/o Seemappa, in Respect of Property Bearing syno.187/6, in Measuring 0.31 Guntas, in which 0.04 Guntas, In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.MBL-1-00145-2005-06,CD No.MBLD6,In regd before of the SRO Mulabagalu, police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2134692/2026, DATED;-01-04-2026, and complaint dated;-01-04-2026, by respective person, if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.
Place;-Chinthamani,
Date;-01-04-2026
K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI.M;-9980110692

IN THE COURT OF THE PRINCIPAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, AT DODDABALLAPURA
Cri. Misc.No: 987/2025
Sri. Ramesh. R. T, S/o Late. Thimmarayappa Aged about 55 years, R/at Rampura Village, Doddabelavangala Hobali, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
...Petitioner
AND;
The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura.
...Respondent
PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby informed to the general public, that the above named petitioner has filed this petition to obtain the death certificate of his mother Late. Channamma W/o Late. Thimmarayappa died on 25-02-2022 in home at Rampura Village, Doddabelavangala Hobali, Doddaballapura Taluk, if anybody who have any objection to the above petition or having any rights, claims are hereby informed to take notice of this petition and hereby directed to appear before this Court in person or through person or by their Advocate on 2.5.26 at 11:00 a.m. if failed to appear the above petition will be heard and will be placed ex-parte.
Issued as per the order and seal of this Hon'ble Court, on this day of 28-3.26
By order of the Court
Chief Ministeral Officer
Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Advocate for petitioner : Sri. R.M. Keshavakumar, Advocate, Mallikarjuna Complex, Near Kalyani, Opp. Civil Court Complex, Rojipura, Doddaballapura - 561203

IN THE COURT OF HON'BLE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE, AT DODDABALLAPURA.
C.Mis. No.29/2026
Petitioner : Smt. Komala D/o Anjinamurthy, Aged about 21 years, R/at Kaligere Village, Doddaballbelavangala (H), Doddaballapura (Tq).
V/s
Respondent : **The Thasildar,** Doddaballapura
NOTICE THROUGH PUBLICATION
Whereas the above named petitioner has filed the petition in order to seek death certificate of her grate grandmother namely Ramakka W/o late Anjinappa who died on 04.03.1985.
Any person or persons having any objections regarding the issuance of death certificate of her grate grandmother can file the necessary objections before the Hon'ble Court.
The above petition is posted on for your objections it is hereby called upon the general public is there any objections nor claims in respect of issuance of death certificate of Petitioner grate grandmother they can appear before the aforesaid date 21.04.2026 at 11 A.M before the Hon'ble court, on the same day if the general public has not come up with any objections the court will decided the petition in your absence. 23.03.26
Given under my hand the seal of this court on this day 23.03.2026 March 2026 Hon'ble Additional Civil Judge Court at Doddaballapura.
By Order of the Court : Shirasthedar
Chief Ministeral Officer
Prl Civil Judge & JMFC, Doddaballapura
Sri. Renuka Prasad.S.Y, Advocate, Prakruthi Law Associates, Near Puttaspatre, Oppo. Court Complex, Doddaballapura

IN THE COURT OF HON'BLE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE, AT DODDABALLAPURA.
C.Mis. No.28/2026
Petitioner : Smt. Komala D/o Anjinamurthy, Aged about 21 years, R/at Kaligere Village, Doddaballbelavangala (H), Doddaballapura (Tq).
V/s
Respondent : **The Thasildar,** Doddaballapura
NOTICE THROUGH PUBLICATION
Whereas the above named petitioner has filed the petition in order to seek death certificate of her grate grandfather namely Anjinappa S/o late S/o late Doddaobalappa who who died on 10.04.1980.
Any person or persons having any objections regarding the issuance of death certificate of her grate grandfather can file the necessary objections before the Hon'ble Court.
The above petition is posted on for your objections it is hereby called upon the general public is there any objections nor claims in respect of issuance of death certificate of Petitioner grate grandfather they can appear before the aforesaid date 21.04.2026 at 11 A.M before the Hon'ble court, on the same day if the general public has not come up with any objections the court will decided the petition in your absence.
Given under my hand the seal of this court on this day.... 23.3.26 March 2026 Hon'ble Additional Civil Judge Court at Doddaballapura.
By Order of the Court : Shirasthedar
Chief Ministeral Officer
Prl Civil Judge & JMFC, Doddaballapura
Sri. Renuka Prasad.S.Y, Advocate, Prakruthi Law Associates, Near Puttaspatre, Oppo. Court Complex, Doddaballapura

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Mandya gas supply safe, no disruption reported: Dr. Kumar

MANDYA

The Deputy Commissioner of Mandya, Dr. Kumar, assured residents that the domestic gas supply in the district is running smoothly, with no disruptions, and the public need not worry.

Speaking at a meeting with sales officers of HPC, BPC, and IOC gas distribution companies at the District Collector's office, Dr. Kumar emphasized that all companies must follow government guidelines and supply domestic gas according to daily demand.

There are 34 gas distributors in the district. The Food Department officials have been directed to inspect stocks regularly to prevent illegal sales. Dr. Kumar warned that any black-market sales would result in strict legal action.

Agencies must prioritize fulfilling advance bookings from households and ensure timely distribution. Special attention is also required for Anganwadis, schools, hospitals, and government hostels to avoid disruption of essential services.

The Deputy Commissioner said the daily supply of domestic gas is operating as usual and urged citizens not to panic or spread confusion.

The meeting was attended by District Superintendent of Police Dr. V. J. Shobharani, Deputy Director of the Food Department Pratik Hegde, and officials from gas companies and supply outlets across the district's taluks.

Officials reminded the public to report any irregularities and emphasized that authorities are closely monitoring the situation to maintain smooth gas distribution for all residents.

HISTORIC KANNADA CARVINGS

Ancient Krishnadevaraya Era inscriptions found in Pavagada

PAVAGADA

Two rare stone inscriptions dating back to the reign of Krishnadevaraya have been discovered in Doddenahally village of Pavagada taluk, shedding light on the region's rich historical past. The inscriptions were identified by researcher H. M. Nagaraju near a mound known as Tirumala Devara Gadde on the outskirts of the village. The stones, which were partially buried in the ground, were carefully examined and confirmed as ancient inscriptions.

With the support of landowner R. L. Narasimhaiah and retired official B. Thippeswamy, the stones were safely lifted and preserved. Researcher Guruvepalli Narasimhulu also assisted in reading and studying the text.

The inscriptions, written in Kannada script, contain a total of 47 lines across two stones. The first stone has 26 lines, while the second has 21 lines. Both stones feature carvings of the sun and moon at the top.

According to experts, the inscriptions date back to the Shalivahana era and belong to a period when the Vijayanagara Empire flourished. They are believed to be donation records linked to the Vaishnava tradition during the rule of local leader Jakkaraya.

The site, known as Tirumala Devara Gadde, is believed to be the remains of an ancient temple. Ruins such as stone pillars, door structures and platforms can still be seen, though they are now covered with soil and vegetation.

Researchers said efforts are ongoing to fully decode the inscriptions, as some portions have been damaged over time. The discovery is expected to provide valuable insights into the history and culture of the region.

Govt cuts taxes to boost local trade

NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs launched a major relief plan to support Special Economic Zone (SEZ) units.

This new measure, effective from April 1, 2026, allows these units to sell manufactured goods within India at significantly lower tax rates to combat global trade disruptions.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs launched a major relief plan to support Special Economic Zone (SEZ) units.

Following the Union Budget's vision, the government is cutting customs duties to keep factories running. For many products, a 20 percent tax has been slashed to just 12.5 percent. Goods previously taxed at 30 or 40 percent will now see rates drop to 15 or 20 percent. This one-year window aims to balance the scales for local manufacturers while protecting the economy.

To qualify for these cheaper rates, units must have started production by March 2025. Additionally, the goods must have at least 20 percent value added during the manufacturing process. To ensure the focus remains on international trade, these local sales are capped at 30 percent of the unit's highest recent export value.

The government has excluded certain sensitive sectors to protect existing domestic industries from unfair competition. Digital systems will handle these new tax assessments automatically to ensure speed and transparency. Detailed guides are being released to help businesses navigate these changes. Officials believe this strategic move will provide a vital safety net for workers and owners facing shipment delays and rising costs due to international conflicts.

Once known as backward now a hub of innov: Modi on Assam

PM highlights Assam's transformation into a modern innovation hub, fueled by massive infrastructure projects and improved connectivity

BISWANATH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said Assam is entering a historic phase of growth. During a massive rally in Biswanath, he explained how major infrastructure projects and improved connectivity are rapidly changing the state's global image.

He noted that regions once known for backwardness are now hubs of modern progress and innovation.

The Prime Minister highlighted new highways designed to handle fighter jet landings, calling them symbols of a modern nation. These improvements in roads, bridges, and railways are not just for travel; they are boosting local farming, industry, and tourism while creating thousands of jobs for young people.

Addressing long-standing local struggles, Modi discussed the fight against floods and land erosion. He announced that while many projects are active, another 18,000 crore rupees is planned for future protection measures. He also praised the "Lakhpati Didi" initiative, which helps women gain financial independence. The government aims to support 40 lakh women through this scheme in the coming years. The highlight of the event was the announcement of a massive 18,500 crore rupee underwater tunnel beneath the Brahmaputra River. Connecting Numaligarh and Gohpur, this tunnel will slash travel times and link the Northeast more effectively. As the state prepares for Assembly elections on April 9, the Prime Minister emphasized that these mega-projects are the foundation of a prosperous future. This surge in development marks a turning point for Assam, proving that the state is no longer waiting for progress—it is leading it.

'Brahmaputra Tunnel Project to boost Northeast connectivity'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an underwater tunnel project under the Brahmaputra River to improve connectivity in the Northeast. The project, worth Rs 18,500 crore, will link Gohpur and Numaligarh, reducing travel time and boosting transport. Speaking at a rally in Assam, he said the tunnel will create jobs and support economic growth in the region. He added that better infrastructure will benefit youth and local businesses. The Prime Minister also highlighted welfare schemes, saying lakhs of families have received permanent houses and more will benefit soon. He noted that many women are becoming financially independent through government programs. He further spoke about plans to tackle floods, improve farming support, and expand healthcare and education, stressing the government's focus on development and better living standards in Assam.

UP CM orders fast farm relief

LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stepped in to support farmers struggling with sudden, unseasonal rainfall.

After reviewing weather damage across several districts, the Chief Minister ordered local leaders to stay on high alert.

He made it clear that protecting the livelihood of farmers is the government's top priority during this weather crisis.

To ensure help arrives quickly, the Chief Minister instructed District Magistrates to submit detailed ground reports immediately. He wants a clear picture of the challenges farmers are facing.

The Revenue and Agriculture departments, along with insurance companies, have been told to work together on a massive survey.

This joint effort will assess exactly how much crop damage has occurred so that compensation can be paid out without any annoying red tape.

CM Yogi noted that rain over the last few days has already hurt local harvests. While some money is already being distributed for earlier losses, he insisted that this new wave of relief must move even faster.

POLICE FILE CHARGES IN FOREIGN JOB SCAM

SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir Crime Branch has officially filed a charge sheet against a man accused of running a fake overseas job agency. The legal move follows an investigation into Farhat Abbas Malik, who allegedly operated a fraudulent consultancy called "Fly High Business Consultant."

The case began when a man, who had lost his job during the COVID-19 pandemic, sought employment abroad to support his family. He contacted Malik, who promised him a high-paying international position. Trusting the consultant, the victim handed over a large sum of money and his original documents, including his passport.

However, the investigation revealed that Malik never intended to provide a job. He kept the cash and failed to return the victim's personal papers. During police questioning, Malik admitted to taking the money but could not fulfill his promise. He further confessed that he had lost the victim's passport, leading authorities to add charges for the destruction of evidence.

The Special Crime Wing of Srinagar handled the complex probe, as these specialized teams focus on high-profile fraud while regular police manage security. Malik's request for bail was recently rejected by the court, and he remains in custody at the Central Jail in Srinagar.

Giving gift of knowledge the highest form of service: Prez

TUMAKURU

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday lauded late Sri Sri Shivakumara Mahaswamiji of Siddaganga Mutt as a man who lived his life in service of the poor and underprivileged.

Participating in the 119th birth anniversary celebration of Shivakumara Mahaswamiji and Guruvandana Mahothsava at the Siddaganga Mutt, Murmu said although the beloved saint passed away in 2019, his spirit continues to nourish the nation.

She highlighted how his work transformed spirituality into practical welfare. The President specifically thanked the Math for continuing his legacy by offering education to thousands of students, ranging from primary school to advanced engineering and management degrees.

The President emphasized that giving the gift of knowledge is the highest form of service. By educating children from rural and marginalized backgrounds, the Math is building a fairer and more inclusive society. She also pointed out that the Sree Siddha-Ganga Hospital provides vital healthcare to the public, proving that religion and social work can go hand in hand.

Vijayendra challenges CM to public debate

BENGALURU

Karnataka's political atmosphere heated up as BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra challenged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to a district-wide tour.

This bold move follows a tense back-and-forth regarding the state's financial health. Vijayendra urged the Chief Minister to step onto a public platform in every district to discuss who has truly benefited from the government's current schemes.

The dispute centers on a demand for a "white paper"—a clear, factual report on the state's economy. While the Chief Minister argues that the official State Budget is transparent enough, Vijayendra claims the budget is merely a cover-up for a growing debt trap. He alleged that Karnataka's total debt has now crossed 8.14 lakh crore rupees, with interest payments alone costing 48,000 crore rupees this year.

Vijayendra raised several red flags, claiming the treasury is so empty that even freedom fighters are facing pension delays. He also accused the government of diverting funds meant for marginalized communities to pay for popular "guarantee" schemes. Furthermore, he highlighted a massive unemployment crisis, stating that nearly 2.85 lakh government jobs remain vacant while young people protest in the streets for opportunities.

From unpaid guest lecturers to unfulfilled promises for farmers, the BJP leader painted a picture of financial mismanagement. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah dismissed these claims as "political frustration," maintaining that the state's finances are secure.

Dhami pays last respect to ex-Army officer killed by stray bullet

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami visited the home of retired Brigadier VK Joshi on Tuesday to pay his final respects.

The military veteran was tragically killed on Monday morning after being struck by a stray bullet during a violent shootout between two groups in Dehradun.

The incident occurred in the Rajpur area while the Brigadier was out for a morning walk. An argument between people in two separate vehicles escalated into a firing exchange, and the innocent veteran was caught in the crossfire. Despite being rushed to a nearby hospital, he later succumbed to his injuries.

CM Dhami met with the grieving family to offer his condolences and promised that the culprits would face the harshest possible punishment. "The safety of the public is our top priority," the Chief Minister stated. He announced the launch of "Operation Strike," a new police initiative aimed at removing violent elements from the state. He warned that anyone tampering with law and order would not be spared.

The tragedy has sparked a political heated debate. Opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, criticized the government, claiming the incident reflects a collapse of public safety.

They argued that those who defended the nation's borders should feel safe in their own neighborhoods. In response, state officials emphasized their commitment to restoring peace.

The community remains in shock as they mourn a hero whose life was cut short by a senseless act of street violence. Justice, the Chief Minister insists, will be swift.

Kidney recipient's health crisis sheds light on organ trafficking ring

KANPUR

A woman who received a kidney in an illegal transplant ring is now fighting for her life. Doctors in Kanpur reported yesterday that the patient's condition has worsened significantly, leading to urgent calls for her transfer to a specialized hospital.

Medical experts discovered alarming health signs during a recent checkup. Chief Medical Superintendent Saurabh Agrawal revealed that the woman is suffering from high blood pressure, low urine output, and a dangerous drop in hemoglobin levels. High infection markers and rising creatinine values suggest her body may be rejecting the new organ.

"We must act now to save both the patient and the kidney," Agrawal stated, noting that only authorized transplant centers have the tools to handle such serious complications.

The case has exposed a dark criminal network operating out of Medlife Hospital in the Kalyanpur area. Police have already arrested six people, including hospital operators and brokers. Investigators are now chasing more names linked to the organ trafficking ring.

The donor, an MBA student, told a heartbreaking story of being lured into the deal. Facing extreme financial pressure and unable to pay his college fees, he agreed to sell his kidney under false promises. This scandal has put the local healthcare system under intense pressure to explain how such a dangerous procedure happened without approval. As the investigation deepens, the focus remains on the victim's survival. Her case serves as a grim warning about the life-threatening risks of the illegal organ trade.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE SIRSI
Sl.No / APMC/ SIRSI/ DEV/624/2025-26 Date: 31-03-2026
Re-call E-Tendar Notification
Under the Annual Action Plan of Sirsi Agricultural Produce Market Committee for the year 2025-26, item-wise tender prices in double-envelope system for below given INDENT work have been invited from eligible contractors registered by the Public Works Department on the KPPP portal. Standard Tendering Document KW-3 **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Eligible contractors can submit tenders. For more information, please visit the above website and during office hours.
Tender Indent No.: APMC/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT835/CALL 2, Amount put Tender (Excluding GST): **84,78,214-59,** Last date and time for receipt of tender: **Date: 22-04-2026 Time : 4.00 PM.**
Sd/- Secretary, APMC, Sirsi **Sd/- Administrator, APMC, Sirsi**
DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/01/26-27 dt. 01.04.2026

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
INVITATION FOR TENDER (Call-2)
(only through KPP-Portal)
BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Contractors for the following works.
Office of the Chief Engineer (D&Q.A), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G.Road, Bengaluru-560 009

Division	IFT Number	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
Buildings	BWSSB/EE (Buildings)/ PB/4786/2025-26 Date: 10.03.2026	Rs. 8,78,091/- / Rs. 22,000/-	09.04.2026 Upto 4.00 P.M.	10.04.2026 after 4.00 P.M.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Buildings)
The details regarding the tender & participation in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.
DIPR/DD-C.P/12/KSMCA/2026-27

Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Department, Kolar
KPPP Short term Tender Notification No:15/ 2025-26, Dated: 26.03.2026
On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Department invites tender for the scheme approved under Jal Jeevan Mission(Functional household tap connection) 2022-23 of Kolar District, Item rate tenders by two cover system through KPP portal. Those who have registered in PWD/CPWD (Government of Karnataka) are eligible in participation of tendering for more details visit **website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Last date for online submission of Bid is **28.04.2026 upto 17.30 hours.**
Sd/- Executive Engineer, RDW&S Division, Kolar
DIPR/KOLAR/R.O NO:04/KSMCA/2026-27

Govt.of Karnataka
Office of the Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation, Division Vijayapur
Tel.No:08352-277941, E-mail: eerdwsd.bjp@gmail.com
No:EE/RDWSD/VJP/KPPP/Tender/2025-26/1868
Dated:27.03.2026
KPPP PORTAL TENDER NOTIFICATION
On behalf of Governor of Govt. of Karnataka Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking water and sanitation division, Vijayapur has invited tender through KPPP Portal for JJM FHTC & MVS O&M head of accounts as follows.
Two Cover : 02 Works
Last date for submission of online tender through KPPP Portal is **22.04.2026 at 5.30 PM.** Date of Pre Bid Meeting 21.04.2026, Date of opening of Technical bid is **23.04.2026 after 5.30 PM.** Date of Opening of Financial bid is 24.04.2026 at 11.00 AM. (or after Technical bid evaluation)
More details can be have from the office of the undersigned and also through www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in
Sd/- Executive Engineer, RDW&S Division, Vijayapur
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/849/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ.
ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ. ಮೌಲಾನಾ ಆಜಾದ್ ಭವನ, ಕೆರೆಯಂಗಳ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ–571402, ದೂ–08232–297240.
ಇ–ಮೇಲ್ : dommandya@gmail.com
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಅಸಂಕಇ(3)/ಆಹಾರ–ಟೆಂಡರ್/ಸಿ.ಆರ್–04/2023–24. ದಿನಾಂಕ:31.03.2026.
ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖಾ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಮೆಟ್ರಿಕ್ ನಂತರದ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿನಿಲಯಗಳು/ವಸತಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳಿಗೆ "ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಎ ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಬಿ, ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಸಿ ಮತ್ತು ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಡಿ ಆಹಾರ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳ ಪೂರೈಕೆಗಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅನ್ನು (ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: MWD/2025-26/1NO123) ದ್ವಿ–ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಂತೆ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯವರು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಅನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.
(1) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗೆ ಇಟ್ಟ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ : 296.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು. (2) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಫಾರಂ ಅಪ್ ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಪ್ರಾರಂಭಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 23.03.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00. (3) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಫಾರಂ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 22.04.2026, 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. (4) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ಪೂರ್ವ ಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಥಳ : ದಿ:02.04.2026, 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಸ್ಥಳ:– ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ. (5) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆ ತೆರೆಯುವ ಸ್ಥಳ, ವೇಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ದಿನಾಂಕ : ದಿ:24.04.2026, 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಸ್ಥಳ:– ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ. (6) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆಯನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ಸ್ಥಳ, ವೇಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ದಿನಾಂಕ : (ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾದವರಿಗೆ ಆನಂತರ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು) ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ. (7) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪಾವತಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ : 4,44,000/–. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ Website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಅಥವಾ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಕಛೇರಿಯನ್ನು ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:–08232–297240 ಅನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಲು ಕೋರಿದೆ.
ಸಹಿ/–ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ.
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಸನಿ–ಮಂ/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/927/2026–27

QUICK READ

Donation law triggers sharp political clash nationwide

NEW DELHI

A new law on foreign donations has sparked a strong political debate in India. Priyank Kanoongo accused Opposition leaders of supporting groups misusing foreign funds, saying NGOs should rely on domestic support. He backed the government's move to regulate funding. Meanwhile, Opposition parties called the law undemocratic and harsh. They warned it could allow authorities to seize properties of NGOs if licences lapse. Leaders like Manish Tewari said it may harm charities providing healthcare and education in remote areas. Critics fear even small errors could lead to strict action, raising concerns over the future of social work.

Sarma targets JMM, raises outsider issue

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said voters in the state do not support "outsider" parties, targeting the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha during an election campaign. He remarked that the party's identity does not connect with Assam's people. Sarma also criticised the Congress for mentioning singer Zubeen Garg in its manifesto, calling it inappropriate to involve cultural figures in politics. He urged the party to remove such references. As elections near, political exchanges have intensified across the state. Sarma expressed confidence that the BJP will secure a strong mandate based on its development agenda and grassroots support.

Govt assures adequate seed stock for Kharif season

NEW DELHI

The government said India has sufficient seed stock for the upcoming Kharif season despite global supply disruptions caused by the West Asia crisis. Additional Secretary of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, Maninder Kaur Dwivedi, stated that the country's self-reliant seed system, supported by ICAR, public, and private sectors, ensures steady supply. For Kharif 2026, seed availability stands at 185.74 lakh quintals, exceeding the required 166.46 lakh quintals. Rabi season seed inputs are also in place. Wholesale prices of key crops like tomato, onion, and potato are stabilising. Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan emphasised timely fertiliser availability.

Mizoram starts NE's first digital population census

This marks a major shift in how the nation collects data, moving from paper forms to a modern online portal

AIZAWL

Mizoram made history by becoming the first state in Northeast India to launch the digital Census 2027.

Chief Minister Lalduhoma officially kicked off the campaign by completing his own "self-enumeration" at his residence. This marks a major shift in how the nation collects data, moving from paper forms to a modern online portal.

The process is divided into two parts. The first phase, which focuses on listing houses and living conditions, began today. The second phase, which counts the actual population, is set for February 2027. For the first time, citizens can log in to a secure website using their mobile phones to submit their own household details. This "self-enumeration" window will stay open until April 15, after which officials will visit homes to verify the data.

Senior leaders, including the Home Minister and PWD Minister, joined the Chief Minister in using the new digital system. Officials from the Aizawl Municipal Corporation helped facilitate the process to ensure accuracy. When a resident finishes their online form, they receive a unique ID number to share with visiting census workers later this month.

The state government is encouraging everyone to participate digitally, noting that it allows families to provide information at their own convenience. By leading the way in the Northeast, Mizoram aims to make the census faster, more accurate, and more environment-friendly. This high-tech approach is expected to set a new standard for data collection across the entire country.

Political parties split over 2027 census details

India's 2027 Census officially kicked off, sparking a heated debate among political leaders over how the data should be collected.

While the BJP and PDP emphasized the importance of the count for future planning, the Congress Party issued a strong demand to include Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the national tally.

The Census will occur in two stages, starting with house listing this month and ending with a full population count in February 2027. Government officials explained that this new data is vital because current policies are still based on the outdated 2011 Census. Leaders from Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh noted that an accurate headcount is the only way to ensure that welfare schemes actually reach the millions of people who need them today.In Bihar, BJP President Sanjay Saraogi praised Prime Minister Modi's leadership for introducing a digitalized system and including caste details in the second phase. Meanwhile, PDP leaders argued that a thorough census would ensure that no single section of society is prioritized over others in jobs and education. They believe equal opportunities can only be created once the government has a clear picture of every community.

However, the Congress Party remains vocal about its concerns. Senior leader V. Hanumantha Rao argued that while Scheduled Castes and Tribes are being counted, the OBC community must also be specifically included to ensure total transparency. As the count moves across different states throughout 2026, the government maintains that this massive digital undertaking will finally provide the "honest account" needed for a modern India.

4 priests arrested after deadly Bihar stampede

Cops also filed a criminal case against 40 people after the disaster claimed the lives of nine devotees and left dozens injured.

PATNA

Authorities in Bihar launched a major crackdown following a tragic stampede at the Sheetla Mata Temple in Nalanda district.

Police have arrested four priests and filed a criminal case against 40 individuals after the disaster claimed the lives of nine devotees and left many others injured.

The tragedy occurred on Tuesday in Madhada village, just as the region was hosting high-profile visitors. Preliminary investigations by the Deepnagar police suggest that extreme negligence and a total lack of crowd management led to the chaos. An official FIR has been registered against 20 named suspects and 20 unidentified people as raids continue to find those responsible for the safety lapse.

The incident has sparked nationwide grief. President Droupadi Murmu, who was in Nalanda for a university convocation on the day of the crush, expressed her deep distress over the loss of life. Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan also offered his sympathies, echoing the public's anger over the lack of safety protocols at religious gatherings.

To support the grieving families, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced a payment of 6 lakh rupees for each victim's kin. The Central Government added another 2 lakh rupees for the families of the deceased and 50,000 rupees for those recovering in hospitals. While the administration provides medical aid, the community remains in mourning, demanding stricter rules to prevent such a tragedy from happening again. This investigation serves as a grim warning to temple authorities across the country regarding public safety.

Delhi police bust illegal gas cylinder racket

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Crime Branch shut down a dangerous illegal gas refilling operation in the Dabri area.

Acting on a secret tip, a specialized team raided a shop in Seetapuri, where they discovered a massive hoard of unauthorized LPG cylinders being sold at black-market prices.

During the raid, officers seized 17 domestic cylinders from major companies, including Indane, Bharat Petroleum, and HP.

The shop owner, 61-year-old Mohan Lal Garg, was caught red-handed refilling cylinders and selling the gas for a staggering 200 rupees per kilogram.

Officials say he was exploiting local residents by creating an artificial shortage to drive up his own illegal profits.

The operation was led by a dedicated team of inspectors and sub-inspectors under the direction of the Crime Branch. They found that Garg had been hiding the cylinders inside his shop, disguised as regular business stock to avoid getting caught.

By refilling these tanks without any safety permits, he was not only breaking the law but also risking a deadly explosion in the crowded neighborhood.

Food Supply officials were called to the scene immediately to document the violations. The police have now registered a formal case under the Essential Commodities Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

This crackdown is part of a larger effort by Delhi authorities to stop hoarders from cheating honest consumers.

Police officials promised that more raids are coming to ensure that essential items like cooking gas remain available and affordable for everyone.

New rules for plastic help clean India

NEW DELHI

India took a massive step toward a cleaner future as new laws mandating recycled plastic in food packaging officially began. Starting this Wednesday, brands are now required to ensure their food-grade containers consist of at least 40 percent recycled material.

The Association of PET Recyclers (APR) Bharat hailed the move as a major victory for the "circular economy." According to Director General Goutham Jain, these guidelines will reduce the nation's reliance on expensive, imported "virgin" plastic. By using recycled PET (rPET), India can protect itself from global supply chain issues while keeping plastic waste out of the environment.

To support this shift, the food safety regulator, FSSAI, recently approved 17 high-tech recycling plants across the country. These facilities use advanced technology that meets strict international safety standards from Europe and the United States. Together, they have the power to produce 300,000 tonnes of recycled plastic, which is enough to handle nearly half of the country's bottling needs.

The government's plan is ambitious but flexible. While companies must aim for high targets, the Ministry of Environment is allowing firms to carry forward any shortfalls over the next three years. This ensures businesses have time to adjust without failing. Looking ahead, the law requires the amount of recycled content to increase by 10 percent every year, reaching a goal of 60 percent by 2029. This policy marks a significant milestone in India's journey to turn plastic waste into a valuable resource.

Bhopal police arrest killer after short encounter

BHOPAL

Local police arrested the prime suspect in a brutal murder following a high-stakes encounter in the Ratibad area.

The accused, identified as Arif (alias "Bom"), had been on the run since Sunday night after allegedly stabbing a 35-year-old tea shop owner, Vijay Mewada, during a minor argument. The capture happened on the outskirts of the city, where Arif sustained injuries during a brief shootout with officers. He is currently under heavy guard at Hamidia Hospital. This arrest follows days of rising tension in Bhopal, where protesters and right-wing groups blocked roads and demanded the death penalty for the killers. Police were forced to use water cannons to stop a massive march toward Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's residence. The violence began when Mewada was heading home after closing his shop. He reportedly stepped in to stop the accused from using abusive language toward his workers. In response, Arif allegedly stabbed him eight times. While two other suspects were caught earlier, the delay in arresting the main killer sparked public outrage and a stern warning from State Minister Vishwas Sarang. The government has promised to take "strict action," including the possible demolition of illegal properties linked to the attackers. To support the victim's grieving family, Minister Sarang announced that the state would cover the education of Mewada's two daughters and provide a job for his widow.

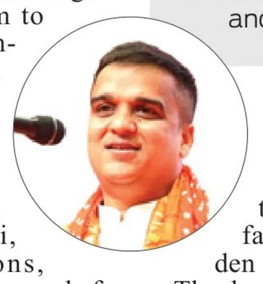
Sanghavi honours workers, farmer families

GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi led a heart-warming ceremony to support both the workforce and the farming community.

During the event in Gandhinagar, five differently-abled employees received permanent job appointments at a state-run cooperative bank, while grieving families of deceased farmers were handed essential insurance checks.

The Gujarat State Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank organized the program to highlight its commitment to social welfare.



The five newly permanent staff members, hailing from branches in Junagadh, Morbi, and other regions, were officially welcomed after successfully completing their probation. Sanghavi personally handed over their orders, praising their dedication and wishing them bright futures in the cooperative sector.

A major focus of the day was providing a financial safety net for rural households.

The Deputy Chief Minister distributed accident insurance payouts to the heirs of three farmers.

One family received 11 lakh rupees, while two others received five lakh rupees each. Sanghavi noted that this money is intended to provide long-term security for families facing sudden loss.

The bank currently provides up to 11 lakh rupees in coverage for every farmer who takes a loan, with the institution paying the full insurance premium.

Bank Chairman Dolar Kotecha explained that these efforts aim to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone involved in the state's agricultural economy.

Held as part of a national governance celebration, the event underscored a dual mission: empowering the disabled and protecting the backbone of India's villages.

Inclusive Support for Workers and Farmers

In Gandhinagar, Harsh Sanghavi led a welfare event where five differently-abled staff secured permanent bank jobs. Families of three deceased farmers received insurance aid up to ₹11 lakh, reinforcing financial security and highlighting the cooperative bank's commitment to social and rural support.

GUJARAT-ODISHA BOND

MAJHI THANKS MODI FOR UTKAL GREETINGS

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed deep gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his heartfelt Utkal Divas wishes.

In a warm response, the Chief Minister noted that the Prime Minister's recognition of Odisha's glorious history and spiritual heritage has resonated deeply with every person across the state.

Majhi highlighted the unique cultural bond between Gujarat and Odisha, pointing to their shared legacy of Sun Temples and the sacred Rath Yatra tradition. He specifically mentioned the Prime Minister's personal participation in the Pahandi ritual in Ahmedabad as a symbol of national unity. This connection, Majhi said, serves as a constant source of inspiration for the people of Odisha.

The Chief Minister also praised the Central Government's massive financial support, including a record 10,600 crore rupees allocated for railways in the 2025–26 budget. This investment, alongside new port projects, is expected to transform Odisha into a top industrial and maritime hub. Majhi thanked the Prime Minister for supporting women's empowerment through schemes like Subhadra Yojana, which helps local sisters become financially independent.

As Odisha approaches its 100th anniversary as a distinct state, the government remains committed to the vision of a "Developed Odisha." Majhi emphasized that protecting Odia identity, language, and culture is the foundation of his leadership. With the blessings of Lord Jagannath, he vowed to work in full partnership with the Union Government to bring new prosperity to the region and its citizens.

Global oil supply risks raise amid Iran war

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has warned that global oil supplies could face disruptions twice as severe this month compared to March, highlighting growing concerns over the ongoing conflict involving Iran

WASHINGTON

The warning from the IEA underscores the urgent need to resolve the conflict, as supply chain disruptions threaten to destabilise global oil markets.

Donald Trump, President of the United States, indicated that the situation could be resolved in the coming weeks, even without a formal agreement. However, his statements have been marked by mixed signals, reflecting a shifting stance on the issue.

Trump suggested that the United States might withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) if European allies fail to take stronger action against Iran, particularly regarding its alleged threat to block the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz. The strait is a key global shipping route for oil, and any disruption there could significantly impact international energy supplies and prices.

In remarks to British media, Trump expressed skepticism about NATO's effectiveness, stating that he had long doubted the alliance's strength. He also referenced Vladimir Putin, claiming that the Russian leader shared similar views about NATO's capabilities.

Despite the heightened rhetoric, Trump maintained that the United States could soon disengage from what it has termed Operation Epic Fury. Speaking to reporters, he suggested a possible timeline of within two to three weeks for ending U.S. involvement in the conflict. He also indicated that a diplomatic agreement with Iran may not be necessary for such a withdrawal.

The ongoing conflict has already resulted in significant casualties and widespread instability across the region, while also causing unprecedented disruptions in energy markets. Analysts warn that continued uncertainty and inconsistent policy signals from Washington could further exacerbate volatility in global oil prices and supply chains.

The situation remains fluid, with global stakeholders closely monitoring developments as the risk to energy security intensifies.

Aus PM warns of prolonged economic impact

SYDNEY

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has warned that the economic fallout from the ongoing Middle East conflict will be felt for months, as rising fuel prices and supply disruptions begin to impact households across the country.

In a rare national address broadcast simultaneously across major television and radio networks, Albanese highlighted the severity of the situation, drawing comparisons to previous emergency communications during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2008 global financial crisis. The Prime Minister stressed that although Australia is not directly involved in the conflict, its economic consequences are being felt nationwide.

Australia, which relies on imports for nearly 90 percent of its fuel needs, has been particularly vulnerable to

global supply disruptions. The ongoing conflict involving the United States, Israel, and Iran, along with the blockade of the strategically critical Strait of Hormuz, has led to a sharp surge in petrol and diesel prices. In some areas, localised fuel shortages have also been reported, further intensifying public concern.

Albanese acknowledged the strain on households, stating that the war has triggered what he described as the largest spike in fuel prices in history. He noted that while Australia remains a non-participant in the conflict, citizens are indirectly bearing the financial burden through higher transportation and energy costs.

The economic shocks caused by this war will be with us for months, Albanese said, urging Australians to remain cautious and cooperative during this period of uncertainty. He appealed to citizens to take practical steps to reduce pressure on fuel supplies, including avoiding panic buying or stockpiling fuel ahead of the Easter holidays.

The Prime Minister also encouraged greater use of public transport as a way to conserve fuel and manage demand more effectively. His appeal comes at a time when many Australians are preparing for increased travel during the holiday period.

The address underscores the broader global impact of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, with countries far removed from the conflict still facing significant economic repercussions. Analysts warn that continued instability could prolong supply disruptions and keep fuel prices elevated in the near term.

Bolsonaro gains momentum in Presidential race

BRASILIA

Since launching his candidacy last year, Flavio Bolsonaro has focused heavily on international outreach, meeting conservative allies abroad while maintaining close contact with his father, former President Jair Bolsonaro.

The ex-president is currently serving a sentence in Brasília over his alleged involvement in a failed coup attempt. Despite this backdrop, his popularity has surged significantly in recent months.

Opinion polls simulating a potential contest show Bolsonaro drawing level with incumbent President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Lula, an 80-year-old leftist leader, is facing mounting challenges, including a slowing economy and a banking scandal that has unsettled the political climate in Brasília. These factors appear to have contributed to the narrowing gap between the two leaders.

Sources close to Bolsonaro indicate that his growing momentum has given him additional flexibility in shaping his campaign strategy. By aligning his platform broadly with his father's political approach, he has managed to consolidate support among right-wing voters while buying time to refine his economic agenda and build a broader coalition.

The announcement of his economic advisory team, initially expected in May, may now be postponed further. Earlier, in December, aides had suggested that Bolsonaro might unveil his economic program by February in an effort to reassure business communities. However, with his improved standing in the polls, the urgency to present detailed policy frameworks appears to have diminished.

Political analysts note that while the delay could allow for a more carefully constructed policy platform, it may also raise questions about preparedness as the election draws closer.

Mangione seeks delay in Federal trial over overlapping murder case

NEW YORK

Mangione, 27, is currently facing federal charges including stalking in connection with the December 4, 2024 killing of Brian Thompson, the chief executive of UnitedHealthcare.

According to court schedules, in-person jury selection for the federal trial is set to begin on September 8, with opening statements expected on October 13.

However, Mangione's legal team has requested that the federal proceedings be postponed until January. The request comes as he is also facing a separate trial on New York state murder charges, which is scheduled to begin on June 8. His lawyers argue that preparing for two complex and high-stakes trials simultaneously would significantly hinder his ability to mount an effective defense.

In a letter dated March 18 addressed to U.S. District Judge Margaret Garnett, Mangione's attorneys emphasized the challenges posed by the overlapping timelines. They stated that

the defendant is being forced to divide his attention and resources between two serious legal battles, both of which carry severe consequences.

Prosecutors from the Manhattan U.S. Attorney's Office have opposed the request, arguing that the current schedule should remain unchanged. They maintain that there is no sufficient justification to delay jury selection or opening statements in the federal case.

The case continues to attract public and legal scrutiny as it unfolds, with the court expected to weigh the arguments from both sides before making a decision on the trial timeline. The outcome of this hearing could have a significant impact on how the proceedings move forward in both the federal and state cases.

Israeli death penalty law sparks fear among Palestinians

JERUSALEM

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank have expressed deep concern following the passage of a controversial new law in Israel that makes the death penalty the default sentence for Palestinians convicted of lethal attacks.

The legislation has triggered fears about due process and potential human rights violations.

The law, recently passed by Israel's lawmakers, mandates capital punishment—specifically execution by hanging—for individuals found guilty of carrying out attacks deemed to threaten the state's existence.

While the law technically applies to all citizens, critics argue that its wording makes it highly unlikely to be enforced against Jewish Israelis, raising concerns about unequal application.

Palestinian families in the West Bank have voiced alarm that their detained relatives could face execution without adequate legal safeguards. Many fear that the law could bypass established norms of due process, particularly in cases involving politically sensitive charges.

Pak PM's aide spotted with Hafiz Saeed's son Talha

LAHORE

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's close aide, Rana Sanaullah, has brought the spotlight back to the known-but-denied nexus between Pakistan's political leadership and terror outfits after he was spotted with Talha Saeed, son of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Saeed, at a wedding in Faisalabad. A photograph of Rana Sanaullah with Talha Saeed has been widely shared on social media and has gone viral.

In the photograph, Sanaullah, who is PM Shehbaz Sharif's Adviser on Political Affairs, is seen greeting and shaking hands with Talha Saeed.

The photograph reveals how individuals associated with terror outfits continue to remain openly visible and flaunt their influence despite global sanctions. Talha is the son of Hafiz Saeed, the mastermind behind the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. Both Hafez and Talha have been sanctioned by India, the US, and the United Nations Security Council.

Saeed is officially serving a prison sentence in Pakistan but has often been reported to move freely within the country.

Paris attack: France probes pro-Iranian group

PARIS

French authorities are investigating a suspected link between a pro-Iranian group and a foiled attack targeting a major U.S. bank's office in Paris. While officials have pointed to the group known as HAYI, they have emphasized that the connection has not yet been formally confirmed.

The anti-terrorism prosecutor in France stated that the group Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiyya, also referred to as HAYI, is suspected of involvement in the attempted attack on the Paris offices of Bank of America. The incident, which was successfully prevented on March 28, is now under detailed investigation.

According to officials, the group had released a propaganda video on March 23 targeting Jewish interests and communities across France and Europe. The video reportedly mentioned the bank's headquarters located in Paris's 8th district, raising concerns about a potential premeditated plan.

Authorities noted similarities between this attempted attack and other operations carried out in several European countries.

Iran war: Russia alerts citizens about travel

MOSCOW

Russia is warning its citizens not to travel to countries that have extradition treaties with the United States, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Wednesday. Zakharova told reporters that the warning was in response to more than 100 cases where Russians had been arrested abroad at the demand of the US.

A MOVING MOMENT

Evacuated Gaza infants reunite with families

GAZA

In an emotional and long-awaited reunion, 11 children who were evacuated as premature infants from Gaza during the early stages of the conflict have finally returned to their families.

The reunions, facilitated by the United Nations, mark a deeply moving moment for families separated by war and displacement.

The children were among 29 premature babies evacuated from the neonatal intensive care unit at Al Shifa Hospital in November 2023. At the time, Israeli forces had advanced close to the hospital

amid allegations that Hamas was using the facility for military purposes. With the situation deteriorating rapidly, the fragile infants were moved to safety in Egypt under urgent conditions.

Due to the ongoing conflict and the closure of the Gaza-Egypt border, the babies were allowed to travel only under the supervision of medical staff. Their parents were not permitted to accompany them, leading to a prolonged and painful separation that lasted more than two years. During this time, the children grew from vulnerable newborns into toddlers, having never met or been held by their parents.

That chapter came to an end as the children returned to Gaza and were reunited with their families. Scenes of joy, relief, and overwhelming emotion unfolded as parents embraced their children for the very first time since birth. For many, the moment symbolized both personal healing and a rare instance of hope amid ongoing hardship.

One mother, Sundus Al-Kurd, described the anguish of being separated from her daughter for years. As she held her child Bissan, she spoke of the pain of not being able to touch or comfort her during those early, critical stages of life. Her story echoed the experiences of other families who had endured similar emotional trauma.

The reunions highlight the human cost of conflict, particularly on the most vulnerable. While the return of these children brings closure to one of the war's most heartbreaking episodes, many families in Gaza continue to face uncertainty, loss, and separation.

QUICK READ

Growing custodial torture in Pak exposes institutional failure

Islamabad

Pakistan's continued custodial torture reflects grave institutional failure, particularly the lack of adequate training of police forces in modern investigative techniques, like forensic analysis and evidence-based interrogation methods, a report mentioned. As per Pakistan's 'Business Recorder', weak oversight mechanisms and a culture of impunity frequently undermined accountability, allowing normalisation of abusive practices when officers believe they can act without consequences. The tragic death of a suspect in police custody is yet another grim reminder of the widening gap .

Indian envoy presents Letter of Credence to NZ Governor-General

Wellington

India's High Commissioner to New Zealand Muanpuii Saiawi presented her Letter of Credence to New Zealand Governor-General Dame Cindy Kiro on Wednesday who conveyed her best wishes to the Indian diplomat for her new assignment. The presentation of credentials ceremony started with a traditional Maori welcome. High Commissioner Ms. Muanpuii Saiawi presented her Letter of Credence to H.E. The Right Hon'ble Dame Cindy Kiro, Governor-General of New Zealand who conveyed her best wishes for assignment. The presentation of credentials ceremony commenced with traditional Maori welcome.

People protest in Karachi over forced marriages

Islamabad

Christian groups and rights activists staged a protest in Pakistan's Karachi, expressing deep concern over what they described as a rising wave of forced marriages and religious conversions involving minor girls from their community across the country, a leading minority rights group said on Wednesday. According to the Voice of Pakistan Minority, the demonstration, organised by the National Christian Party, Gawahi Mission Trust, and other civil society groups on March 29, brought together families and faith leaders from across Karachi.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	6	5		2	3		8	
2			6			7		
	7			5			6	2
	9			7	5		1	
1		6	4			5		3
	2			3			9	
	5	9		4	8	6		1
4			5				3	
	3	8		1	7	9		5

9	5	8	2	4	6	9	3	1
3	4	1	9	7	8	5	2	6
6	2	7	3	1	5	9	8	4
5	1	9	4	6	2	3	7	8
7	3	4	1	8	9	2	6	5
8	6	2	5	3	7	1	4	9
4	9	5	8	2	3	6	1	7
1	7	3	6	5	4	8	9	2
2	8	6	7	9	1	4	5	3

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

Spain Coach De la Fuente Condemns Anti-Muslim Chants During Friendly

Coach denounces xenophobia after offensive chants mar international friendly match atmosphere.

BARCELONA

Luis de la Fuente has strongly condemned xenophobic behaviour after sections of fans made anti-Muslim chants during Spain's international friendly against Egypt national football team.

The incident occurred during Tuesday's goalless draw in Barcelona, a match that formed part of Spain's preparations for the upcoming FIFA World Cup. Addressing the media after the game, De la Fuente expressed his disapproval in unequivocal terms.

"I feel total and absolute repulsion towards any xenophobic or racist attitudes. They are intolerable," he said, making it clear that such behaviour has no place in football or society.

The chants were particularly sensitive given that Egypt is a majority-Muslim nation and also because Spain's rising star Lamine Yamal is himself Muslim. The episode has raised concerns over fan conduct at international fixtures and the need for stronger measures to ensure inclusivity and respect.

Spain is set to compete in Group H of the expanded 48-team World Cup, where they will face Saudi Arabia national football team, Cape Verde national football team, and Uruguay national football team. Egypt, meanwhile, has been drawn in Group G alongside Belgium, New Zealand and Iran.

The friendly had initially been scheduled to take place in Qatar but was shifted to Spain due to regional instability linked to the ongoing conflict involving Iran. Despite the logistical challenges, the focus has now shifted to addressing the behaviour witnessed in the stands.

Football authorities have in recent years intensified efforts to combat racism and discrimination, yet incidents such as these highlight the persistence of the problem. De la Fuente's firm stance reflects a broader commitment within the sport to uphold values of diversity and mutual respect.

As the World Cup approaches, the spotlight will not only be on performances on the pitch but also on ensuring that the game remains a platform that unites rather than divides.

Italy's World Cup Woes Deepen, 'Third Apocalypse' Sparks Alarm

Repeated failures raise concerns as Italy misses third straight World Cup qualification

ROME

Italy national football team's failure to qualify for yet another FIFA World Cup has triggered widespread criticism, with sections of the Italian media branding the latest setback as the "third apocalypse" in a troubling pattern of decline.

The four-time world champions were eliminated in the qualifying playoffs after a shock penalty shootout defeat to Bosnia and Herzegovina national football team, ranked 66th in the world. The loss marks Italy's third consecutive failure to reach football's biggest stage, following similar playoff exits ahead of the 2018 and 2022 tournaments.

Prominent Italian daily Gazzetta dello Sport captured the national sentiment in a scathing front-page editorial, describing the situation as no longer surprising but rather "the norm." Once considered an anomaly, Italy's absence from the World Cup has now become an alarming trend.

The crisis appears to extend beyond the national team. Italian clubs have also struggled to make an impact in European competitions, with no Champions League triumph since Inter Milan's success in 2010. This season, all Italian teams were eliminated before the quarterfinal stage, highlighting a broader decline in competitiveness.

Structural challenges within domestic football are also under scrutiny. Critics point to congested schedules in Serie A, where clubs have resisted adjustments that could provide national team players with better preparation time. Coaches have repeatedly called for extended training camps, but such demands have largely gone unmet due to commercial pressures.

Adding to the uncertainty is the reluctance of top coaches to take charge of the national side. High-profile figures have either stepped down or declined offers, leaving the federation to appoint less experienced candidates. This has raised questions about leadership stability and long-term vision.

Gabriele Gravina, head of the Italian football federation, acknowledged the seriousness of the situation and hinted at potential changes, including a possible leadership review.

As frustration grows among fans and stakeholders, Italy faces a critical juncture. Restoring its footballing legacy will require not only tactical adjustments but also deep structural reforms to address systemic issues that have led to this unprecedented slump.

Messi delivers goal and assist in likely final Argentina home appearance

Messi Stars in Emotional Farewell as Argentina Thrash Zambia 5-0

BUENOS AIRES

Lionel Messi delivered a memorable performance in what is likely his final home appearance for the Argentina national football team, scoring and assisting in a dominant 5-0 victory over Zambia national football team in an international friendly.

The 38-year-old icon set the tone early at the iconic La Bombonera, assisting Julián Álvarez just four minutes into the match. Messi then found the net himself in the 43rd minute, marking his 116th international goal in 198 appearances for Argentina.

The crowd in Buenos Aires erupted in celebration, giving their talisman a standing ovation in an emotionally charged evening that many believe could be his last on home soil in national colours.

Fans chanted in support, urging Messi to guide Argentina to yet another triumph at the upcoming FIFA World Cup.

Argentina, the reigning world champions, showcased a far more convincing performance compared to their recent narrow 2-1 win over Mauritania. Goals from Nicolás Otamendi and Valentín Barco further underlined the team's attacking strength and readiness for the global stage. Head coach Lionel Scaloni had earlier expressed concerns about the squad's form and warned of possible changes ahead of the World Cup squad announcement deadline. For this match, he fielded a lineup closely resembling the one that triumphed in the 2022 final, though midfielder Rodrigo De Paul was absent due to injury concerns.

Argentina will begin their World Cup campaign on June 16 against Algeria, followed by fixtures against Austria and Jordan in Group J. As preparations intensify, Messi's performance served as a timely reminder of his enduring influence and brilliance. With emotions running high and expectations mounting, the night belonged to Messi—an enduring legend who continues to inspire, even as the curtain slowly begins to fall on his extraordinary international career.

Advani Clinches Maiden National 9-Ball Pool Title on Debut

LUDHIANA

Pankaj Advani showcased his remarkable versatility by clinching his first National 9-ball pool title, defeating Nitin Sharma 11-6 in the final at the Rotary Bhawan.

Widely regarded as one of India's greatest cueists, Advani—primarily known for his dominance in billiards and snooker—made a sensational debut in the fast-paced 9-ball pool format. Representing Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB), the 28-time world champion proved his adaptability by excelling in a discipline he had largely stayed away from for over two decades.

"This is a very different title. It means so much to me to win in a format outside my comfort zone," Advani said after his triumph. Reflecting on his journey, he added that starting as an underdog and eventually lifting the trophy was beyond his expectations.

The final began with Nitin taking an early 3-1 lead, capitalising on a cautious start from Advani. However, once

the Bengaluru-based star found his rhythm and levelled at 3-3, he took control of the contest with clinical precision and tactical brilliance.

Advani's experience came to the fore as he combined sharp potting with intelligent safety play, consistently putting his opponent under pressure. A crucial break-and-run clearance in the 13th rack, followed by another impressive run in the next, helped him surge ahead to a commanding 9-5 lead.

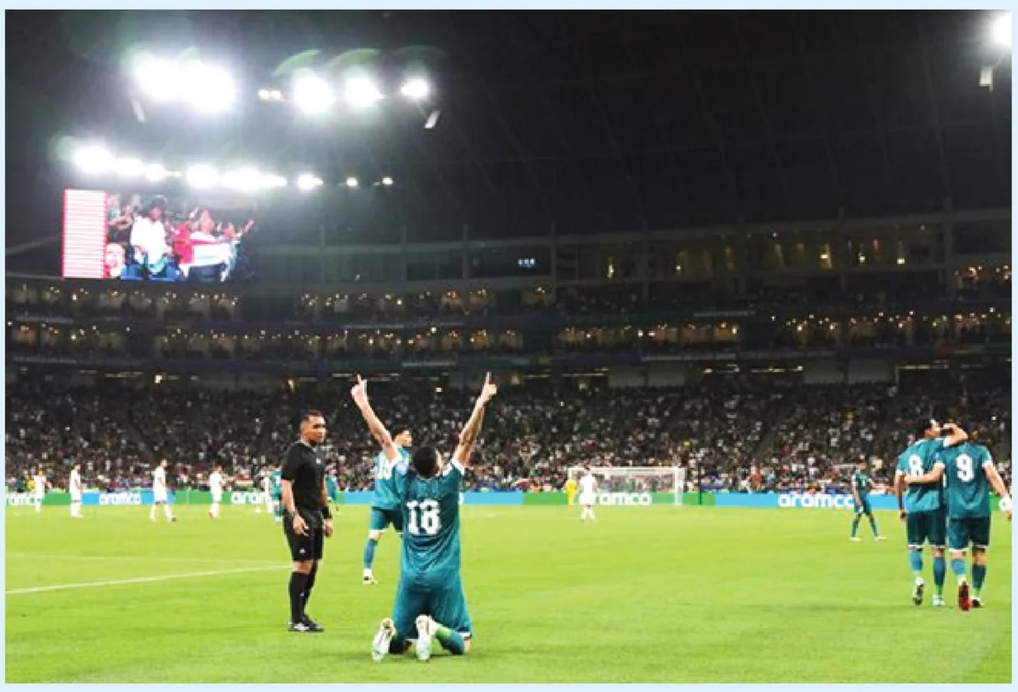
Although Nitin briefly fought back to claim the 15th rack, a costly error in the following frame—scratching after potting the 9-ball—allowed Advani to edge closer to victory. Maintaining composure in the closing stages, he capitalised on his opportunities to seal the match and the title.

Iraq Seal Final WC Spot as Qualifying Marathon Concludes

MONTERREY

The long road to the expanded FIFA World Cup 2026 has finally come to an end, with Iraq national football team clinching the 48th and final spot after a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Bolivia national football team in an intercontinental playoff.

Played in Monterrey, Mexico, the decisive encounter saw Iraq hold their nerve to secure qualification for the global showpiece, marking a significant achievement for the West Asian side. The result capped a qualifying process that stretched over two and a half years, beginning in September 2023 and involving teams from across all confederations.



Earlier in the day, Bosnia and Herzegovina national football team stunned four-time champions Italy national football team in a dramatic penalty shootout, underlining the unpredictability of the final qualification phase. Meanwhile, Congo national football team edged Jamaica national football team 1-0 after extra time in Guadalajara to book their place.

European playoffs also delivered decisive outcomes, with Sweden national football team, Turkey national football team, and Czech Republic national football team emerging victorious in their respective finals to secure qualification.

The 2026 World Cup, set to kick off on June 11, will be co-hosted by United States, Mexico, and Canada, marking the first edition to feature 48 teams.

Iraq have been placed in Group I alongside formidable opponents including France national football team, Norway and Senegal. Defending champions Argentina national football team will compete in Group J, while Spain headline Group H.

With the lineup now complete, attention turns to preparations for what promises to be the biggest World Cup in history. The expanded format offers more nations a chance to shine on the global stage, setting the scene for a diverse and highly competitive tournament.

For Iraq, the qualification marks a return to football's grandest platform and a moment of pride after a demanding campaign that tested endurance, skill, and resilience.

Williams Scores on Debut as India Beat Hong Kong 2-1

KOCHI

Ryan Williams made an instant impact on his international debut, scoring within four minutes to help the India national football team secure a 2-1 victory over Hong Kong national football team in the AFC Asian Cup 2027 qualifiers.

Playing at a packed Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Kochi, with over 22,000 fans in attendance, India delivered a spirited performance to end their otherwise disappointing qualifying campaign on a positive note. The victory also marked the first win under head coach Khalid Jamil.

India started brightly, showing attacking intent from the outset. The breakthrough came early when Manvir Singh delivered a precise ball from the right wing, allowing Williams to slot home with ease and register his maiden international goal.

The hosts carried that momentum into the second half and doubled their lead five minutes after the restart. Akash Mishra rose to meet a long throw from Rahul Bheke, heading the ball into the net to give India a comfortable cushion.

Hong Kong, however, responded with greater urgency after the break. Relying on counter-attacks in the first half, they became more aggressive and managed to pull one back through Everton Camargo, who made a sharp run past Sandesh Jhingan to score. Despite the setback, India's defence held firm in the closing stages.

Ayush Focuses on Smash Variations Ahead of Asia Championships

BENGALURU

Ayush Shetty is fine-tuning his attacking game, particularly adding variation to his smashes, as he prepares for the upcoming Badminton Asia Championships scheduled to be held in China from April 7 to 12.

The 20-year-old, currently ranked World No. 25, has been training at the Centre for Excellence in Bengaluru, where his disciplined routine and calm demeanour have drawn attention. Despite the growing buzz around him, Shetty remains grounded, often taking time to interact with young aspirants before returning to his intense sessions.

Confident in his flat game, Shetty acknowledged that recent training stints with coach Irwansyah Adi Pratama have helped sharpen his defensive skills and rally control.

Though the arrangement is not permanent, the impact has already been significant, giving him greater confidence in handling high-pressure exchanges.

Tottenham Appoint De Zerbi amid Relegation Battle

LONDON

Tottenham Hotspur have appointed Roberto De Zerbi as their new manager in a bold move aimed at avoiding relegation, even as the decision has sparked strong opposition from several supporters' groups.

De Zerbi replaces Igor Tudor, who was dismissed after a brief 44-day interim spell that failed to improve the club's struggling Premier League campaign. Tottenham, currently just one point above the relegation zone with seven matches remaining, are in a precarious position despite being reigning Europa League champions.

The Italian coach arrives with a reputation for an attacking, high-risk style of football and prior Premier League experience with Brighton & Hove Albion. He most recently managed Olympique de Marseille before leaving earlier this year following disagreements with the club's leadership.

However, his appointment has been met with criticism from multiple Tottenham fan groups, largely due to his past public support of Mason

Greenwood during their time together in Marseille. Greenwood had faced serious criminal charges in 2022, which were later dropped in 2023.

Groups including Women of the Lane, Proud Lilywhites, and Spurs Reach have questioned De Zerbi's judgment and expressed concern over what they describe as comments that downplay the seriousness of issues related to violence against women. The Tottenham Hotspur Supporters' Trust also criticised the appointment, calling his past remarks "ill-judged" and urging the club to ensure its values are upheld.

Despite the backlash, Tottenham's leadership has backed De Zerbi, with sporting director Johan Lange stating he was the club's top target. The manager himself acknowledged the urgency of the situation, emphasising that his immediate focus is to steer the team away from relegation.

Tottenham's domestic form has been poor, with no league wins in 2026 and a heavy defeat to Nottingham Forest before the international break. Their next fixture against Sunderland could prove crucial in determining their survival hopes.

With pressure mounting both on and off the pitch, De Zerbi faces the dual challenge of reviving Tottenham's season while addressing concerns from a divided fanbase during a critical phase of the campaign.

+1,186.77 PTS SENSEX 73,134.32 | +348.00 PTS NIFTY 22,679.40 | -0.038 PAISE USD/INR 93.44 | +₹205 GOLD 15,295/1GM | +₹250 SILVER 242,420/1KG

QUICK READ

India's data centre capacity to grow 30% in 2026

New Delhi

India's data centre (DC) capacity is projected to grow around 30 per cent year-on-year in 2026, driven by strong demand and continued investor interest, according to a report released on Wednesday. As per an analysis by CBRE, the estimates suggest an addition of nearly 500 MW of new supply this year, building on the record 440 MW capacity added in 2025 -- a 160 per cent jump compared to the previous year. Domestic total data centre capacity stood at around 1,700 MW at the end of 2025, according to the report. The sector has also attracted significant capital, with investment commitments reaching $56.4 billion in 2025, taking the cumulative total to $126 billion.

8th Pay Commission members seek feedback on key issues

New Delhi

Members of the 8th Pay Commission have begun consultations on the proposed salary revision for central government employees and pensioners. A key meeting is scheduled in Dehradun for April 24, where representatives of employee unions, pensioners' associations, and other stakeholders are expected to present their views on pay structures, allowances, and pension-related issues. Members of the commission are expected to visit various other parts of the country well to hold similar meetings in order to get better acquainted with the problems faced by employees and retirees.

Auto sales boom in March, carmakers hit record highs

New Delhi

India's automobile sector ended March 2026 on a strong note, with major carmakers reporting record sales driven by steady demand, new launches, and expanding customer reach. Kia India emerged as one of the top performers, posting its highest-ever March sales since entering the Indian market. The company sold 29,112 units during the month, marking a 14.5 per cent year-on-year growth compared to 25,525 units in March 2025. The automaker also recorded its best-ever quarterly performance, with sales of 84,316 units in the January–March period, up 11.6 per cent from 75,576 units a year ago.

CBI files case against Anil Ambani, RCom in ₹3,750 crore LIC case

LIC was fraudulently persuaded to invest in NCDs worth 4,500 crore based on false representations about the company's financial stability and asset-backed security.

NEW DELHI

According to an official statement, the case has been filed following a complaint submitted by LIC, accusing RCom and its management of conspiracy, cheating, misappropriation of funds, and violations under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Investigators allege that LIC was fraudulently persuaded to invest in Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) worth ₹4,500 crore based on misleading and false representations about the company's financial stability and the adequacy of asset-backed security.

The complaint is supported by findings from a forensic audit conducted by BDO India LLP, dated October 15, 2020. The audit reportedly uncovered a series of financial irregularities and systemic fund mismanagement within RCom. These include the diversion and misutilisation of funds raised from banks and financial institutions, as well as routing of money through subsidiaries and associated entities.

Further allegations indicate that the company engaged in questionable practices such as misuse of sale invoice financing, discounting of fictitious bills, and siphoning funds through inter-company deposits and shell entities. The audit also highlighted the creation and subsequent write-off of fictitious debtors and receivables, alongside a significant overstatement of security provided against borrowings.

Officials noted a clear mismatch between the assets declared and the actual charges, raising serious concerns about financial transparency and corporate governance within the company. The CBI has initiated a detailed investigation to determine the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties, including unknown public servants who may have facilitated or overlooked the alleged irregularities.

The case marks a significant development in India's efforts to crack down on large-scale financial fraud and ensure accountability in the corporate sector.

Govt mandates 40% recycled content in food packaging from FY27

NEW DELHI

The policy builds on the existing Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, which mandate a gradual increase in recycled content usage, targeting 60% by 2028–29

The Government of India has issued final guidelines mandating the use of 40% recycled content in food-grade PET packaging from April 1, marking a significant step toward strengthening the country's circular economy framework.

The move, aligned with the broader sustainability vision of the Government of India, is expected to accelerate the adoption of recycled materials in the food and beverage sector while reducing reliance on virgin plastics.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has outlined that brands and producers must comply with the 40% recycled content requirement in FY 2026–27. Additionally, companies can carry forward any shortfall in meeting the earlier 30% mandate for FY 2025–26 for up to three years, provided at least one-third of the deficit is addressed annually.

The policy builds on the existing Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, which mandate a gradual increase in recycled content usage, targeting 60% by 2028–29.

Earlier this year, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) authorised 17 recycled PET manufacturing plants, unlocking an estimated capacity of 3 lakh tonnes. This development is expected to support the growing demand for recycled materials under the new mandate.

'Guidelines to strengthen country's recycling ecosystem'

Goutham Jain, Director General, Association of PET Recyclers (APR) Bharat, said, "We wholeheartedly welcome the government's progressive step which has reinforced confidence in the vision of ensuring circular economy. The move is set to significantly ease the supply chain disruptions caused due to recent geo-political uncertainties impacting both availability and pricing of virgin PET. With the current authorised capacities in place, India is well positioned to cater to up to 50 per cent of the total PET requirement for bottling applications through recycled material."

Industry estimates suggest that 15–18 food-grade rPET recycling facilities have already been established across India, with a combined capacity of around 3 lakh metric tonnes and investments ranging between ₹9,000–10,000 crore. These facilities are equipped with advanced technologies and adhere to international standards set by regulatory bodies such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The new guidelines are expected to strengthen India's recycling ecosystem, promote sustainable packaging practices, and contribute to long-term environmental goals by reducing plastic waste and enhancing resource efficiency.

UPI down, users face payment issues nationwide

MUMBAI

According to outage tracking platform Downdetector, complaints surged sharply during the day, pointing to a large-scale technical issue.

Among the worst affected institutions was the State Bank of India (SBI), which recorded over 500 outage reports. Meanwhile, UCO Bank saw around 40 complaints from users facing transaction failures.

The disruption extended beyond individual banks, with UPI-related outage reports also crossing 40 and continuing to rise as more users flagged issues. Customers experienced problems such as failed transactions, delayed processing, and applications not loading properly. In several cases, payments were reported to be stuck midway, leading to uncertainty about whether the transactions had been completed or not.

The issue was not confined to a single region, indicating a nationwide outage. Users from major cities including New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Jaipur, and Pune reported issues while making digital payments.

In the case of SBI, the outage appeared more widespread, with complaints also emerging from Kolkata, Guwahati, and Chennai. On the other hand, UCO Bank users facing disruptions were largely concentrated in New Delhi, Jaipur, and Kolkata.

Frustrated users took to the social media platform X to share their experiences. While some complained about repeated payment failures, others expressed confusion over whether the issue stemmed from their banks, UPI platforms, or personal devices.

Mumbai Airport floats India's first in-terminal Q-commerce service

MUMBAI

Adani Airport Holdings has partnered with Blinkit to introduce app-based quick commerce delivery services inside Mumbai Airport.

The initiative aims to enhance passenger convenience by enabling travellers to order essential items directly within the terminal.

The service has been launched at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, specifically at Terminal 2 for domestic departures. With this rollout, passengers can now order a wide range of products—including phone chargers, snacks, books, and personal care items—through the Blinkit app and receive them within minutes inside the airport premises.

Deliveries are being facilitated across various locations within the terminal, including boarding gates, lounges, food courts, and select partner outlets. The service is managed by trained on-ground personnel to ensure that deliveries

are executed smoothly without disrupting airport operations or passenger schedules.

In addition to standard essentials, travellers can also order permissible liquid items such as packaged water, juices, and cold drinks. These items are sourced from approved in-terminal inventory, ensuring compliance with airport security regulations.

A spokesperson from Adani Airport Holdings stated that the initiative is designed to improve the overall passenger experience by integrating digital convenience into airport services. The move allows travellers to make better use of their waiting time while enjoying seamless access to everyday necessities.

For Blinkit, the collaboration represents an opportunity to expand into a high-demand environment where speed and accessibility are critical. Airports, with their constant flow of passengers and time-sensitive needs, offer a strategic avenue for the quick commerce platform to grow its user base.

From Adani Airport Holdings' perspective, the partnership is expected to enhance passenger comfort while also contributing to increased non-aeronautical revenue through digital retail channels.

The introduction of this service also improves accessibility and affordability in airport retail, giving passengers more choices without being limited by time constraints or store availability. With heavy footfall at Terminal 2, the service is expected to significantly transform the in-terminal shopping experience and set new standards for customer-centric innovation in Indian airports.

'GAAR won't apply to income arising from transfer of investments'

NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has amended income tax rules to provide clarity on the applicability of General Anti-Avoidance Rules (GAAR), in a move aimed at reducing ambiguity around tax avoidance provisions.

In its notification, the CBDT said that GAAR will not apply to income arising from the transfer of investments made before April 1, 2017. The amendment will come into effect from April 1, 2026.

The clarification is expected to provide certainty to investors, particularly in relation to legacy investments, by clearly defining the scope of GAAR provisions.

The development follows a recent ruling by the Supreme Court against Mauritius-based Tiger Global International, where the apex court upheld the Income Tax Department's right to tax the private equity major on gains from its exit from Flipkart in 2018.

The amendment is seen as part of the government's broader effort to balance anti-avoidance measures with the need for a stable and predictable tax regime.

Apart from this, the new income tax law has come into effect from the new fiscal, replacing the six-decade-old 1961 legislation and introducing changes in compliance, terminology and taxation.

A key reform under the new framework is the replacement of the 'Financial Year' (FY) and 'Assessment Year' (AY) with a single 'tax year', which is expected to simplify the filing process and improve clarity for taxpayers.

In addition, timelines for filing income tax returns have been revised. While the July 31 deadline remains unchanged for salaried individuals, non-audit cases such as self-employed taxpayers and professionals will now have time until August 31 to file their returns.

Meanwhile, charges on trading in futures and options have increased, as the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) was raised in the Union Budget by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

India Inc. credit stays strong, testing times ahead amid global headwinds

MUMBAI

Domestic policy measures and relatively stronger corporate balance sheets provide some cushion to the credit profile of India Inc but the critical question is whether these domestic levers will be sufficient to keep credit quality on course if the global environment deteriorates further, a report showed on Wednesday.

Amid the emerging geo-political environment, the credit ratio for the manufacturing and services sector in India improved to 2.06 times in the second half of FY26, up from 1.72 times in H1 FY26. The credit ratio for Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) sector improved to 2.25 times up from 2.10 times in H1FY26, marking a recovery from the stress-driven lows of H2FY25.

CareEdge Ratings' Credit Ratio, which measures the proportion of rating upgrades to downgrades, stood at 1.93 times in the second half of fiscal 2026, lower than 2.56 times observed in the first half.

During this period, 363 entities were upgraded and 188 were downgraded. While the credit ratio remains above the 10-year average of 1.55, the moderation suggests early signs of stress amid a more challenging environment.

Nevertheless, reaffirmations remained high at 80 per cent, indicating that the bulk of the rated universe continues to hold its ground even as the external environment grows more complex, the findings showed.

CareEdge estimates that if crude oil were to average $100 per barrel in FY2027, GDP growth could moderate to 6.5 per cent, while inflation may rise to 5.1–5.3 per cent, said Sachin Gupta, Executive Director and Chief Rating Officer, CareEdge Ratings.

While domestic policy measures and relatively stronger corporate balance sheets provide some cushion, the critical question is whether these domestic levers will be sufficient to keep credit quality on course if the global environment deteriorates further.

For now, the answer leans towards yes — but the margin for comfort is narrowing, he mentioned.

MARKET OUTLOOK

Indian markets offer strong 'alpha' chances in FY27 despite Mideast risks

MUMBAI

India's equity markets are likely to offer strong alpha opportunities in FY27 despite the ongoing West Asia conflict, supported by sectoral divergence, resilient macro buffers and potential recovery in foreign flows, a new report said on Wednesday.

According to Motilal Oswal AMC, the escalation in the West Asia conflict has introduced uncertainty around oil prices, inflation, currency movement and FY27 earnings estimates, and also created a fertile ground for stock-specific opportunities.

We think the construct offers a great chance for alpha, said Prateek Agrawal, MD and CEO, Motilal Oswal AMC, adding that volatility and dispersion across sectors could enable active investors to outperform.

Despite being among the more impacted large economies due to its energy dependence, India remains relatively better placed than many peers owing to its diversified fuel sourcing, strong foreign exchange reserves and lower dependence on oil for power generation.

Moreover, energy imports account for about 2.8 per cent of GDP, with nearly half sourced from the Middle East.

However, forex reserves covering over seven months of imports and around 70 days of oil reserves are expected to provide a cushion in the near term.

Agrawal also pointed to India's ability to process a wide range of crude, including supplies from Russia, as well as its coal-based power ecosystem, which helps limit the impact of global energy shocks on industrial output.

Looking ahead to FY27, the outlook remains scenario-driven, with different sectors likely to outperform under varying conditions, he mentioned.

If the disruption persists, domestically produced commodities such as metals, chemicals and food could benefit from higher prices, while sectors like electric vehicles (EVs) and renewables may see sustained policy and investor interest.

On the other hand, a resolution of the crisis could trigger a revival in growth-oriented segments such as capital markets, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), electronics manufacturing services (EMS), and new-age technology sectors including fintech.

Agrawal added that banking stocks, which have seen sharp corrections due to foreign portfolio investor (FPI) outflows, are now trading at attractive valuations and may offer value opportunities going forward.

KSCA Enforces Cooling-Off Rule, Introduces Season Changes

Strict cooling-off rule and new formats aim to improve fairness standards

BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) has announced significant regulatory changes ahead of its 2026 domestic season, beginning April 15, with a strong emphasis on discipline, transparency, and player development across divisions.

One of the most notable decisions is the strict implementation of a one-season cooling-off period for players returning to Karnataka after representing other states through a No Objection Certificate (NOC). Though part of the rulebook for years, the provision had not been rigorously enforced until now. KSCA secretary Santosh Menon confirmed that the association will adhere to the rule without exception this season, ensuring fairness in player eligibility and discouraging frequent inter-state shifts.

In another major shift, KSCA has made it mandatory for all teams participating in limited-overs tournaments to wear coloured clothing and use white balls. This change will apply across all divisions, including the lower IV and V tiers, marking a progressive move to standardise playing conditions and modernise the domestic structure.

The association has also introduced a player-friendly reform for under-23 cricketers. Young players who have featured in three or fewer red-ball matches in the top three divisions will now be allowed to represent teams in the IV and V divisions. Each team can sign up to two such players, enabling greater match exposure and continuous engagement for emerging talent who might otherwise face limited opportunities during the season.

Additionally, KSCA conducted the draw ceremony for the season-opening GI Kasturirangan Memorial T20 Tournament in the presence of club officials. The process was streamed live to ensure transparency in fixture allocation. Teams were seeded based on their performances in the previous season, and match pairings were finalised through a system inspired by draws seen in global tournaments.

With these measures, KSCA aims to foster competitive balance, eliminate bias concerns, and enhance the overall quality of cricket administration in the state.

Punjab Kings win overshadowed as captain fined for slow over rate violation

Iyer Fined for Slow Over Rate Despite *Punjab Kings'* Winning Start

MULLANPUR

Shreyas Iyer, captain of Punjab Kings, has been fined ₹12 lakh for maintaining a slow over rate during their opening match of the Indian Premier League 2026 season against the Gujarat Titans.

The penalty comes despite Punjab Kings securing a thrilling three-wicket victory to kick off their campaign on a positive note. According to an official statement, this was the team's first offence under Article 2.22 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which deals with minimum over-rate violations, resulting in a monetary fine for the skipper.

In the match played at Mullanpur on March 31, Punjab's bowlers delivered a disciplined performance to restrict Gujarat Titans to 162 for six in their allotted 20 overs. Vyshak Vijayakumar and Yuzvendra Chahal were instrumental with the ball, sharing five wickets between them and keeping the opposition in check through crucial middle overs.

Chasing a modest target, Punjab Kings faced some resistance as their batting lineup struggled to build steady partnerships. However, young Australian batter Cooper Connolly played a match-winning knock, remaining unbeaten on 72 off 44 deliveries to guide his team home in 19.1 overs.

While the victory provided an early boost to Punjab's campaign, the slow over-rate fine serves as a reminder of the league's strict regulations regarding match timings. Repeat offences could lead to steeper penalties, including higher fines and potential suspensions for captains.

Punjab Kings will now turn their attention to their next fixture, an away clash against the formidable Chennai Super Kings on April 3. The team will look to maintain momentum while ensuring compliance with on-field regulations to avoid further disciplinary action.

The incident highlights the IPL's continued emphasis on maintaining the pace of play, ensuring matches conclude within the stipulated timeframes for players, officials, and fans alike.

Praggnanandhaa Falls to Sindarov, Slips to Third in Candidates Race

PAPHOS

R Praggnanandhaa suffered a setback in his campaign at the FIDE Candidates Tournament, losing to Uzbekistan's Javokhir Sindarov in the third round and slipping to third place in the standings.

The defeat came as a blow to the Indian prodigy, who had opened strongly with a win over Anish Giri. With this loss, Praggnanandhaa now has 1.5 points and faces the challenge of regaining momentum in the remaining rounds of the eight-player double round-robin event.

Playing with the white pieces, Praggnanandhaa encountered the Queen's Gambit Declined and appeared on course for a balanced position. However, in a bid to press for advantage, he opted for a more aggressive approach that backfired. Sindarov, one of the rising stars in world chess, capitalised on the opportunity with sharp middle-game play, including a bold piece sacrifice that disrupted White's initiative.

As pressure mounted, Praggnanandhaa was forced into a defensive position and a series of inaccuracies in the middle game proved decisive. Sindarov maintained control and converted his advantage efficiently, underlining his growing stature among the elite. Meanwhile, tournament favourite Fabiano Caruana joined Sindarov at the top of the standings with 2.5 points after defeating China's Wei Yi in a surprisingly quick game. The encounter, which began as an English Opening, ended in just 19 moves after Caruana seized control early and trapped a piece with precise calculation.

Stricter Rules Urged as IPL Pullouts Disrupt Team Strategies

BENGALURU

Growing concerns over last-minute player withdrawals in the Indian Premier League 2026 season have sparked fresh calls for stricter penalties, with franchises and experts highlighting the significant disruption such pullouts cause to team preparation and balance.

Franchises face setbacks as last-minute withdrawals impact planning, balance, and tactics.

Teams invest months in scouting, data analysis, and strategy before finalising their squads at the auction. However, sudden withdrawals—often for non-injury reasons—have left franchises scrambling to find replacements from a limited pool, affecting combinations and long-term planning for the two-month tournament.

A former coach of Punjab Kings noted that such pullouts can derail carefully crafted plans. "A lot goes into identifying and securing a player. When they withdraw at the last minute, it hampers preparation and forces teams to rethink strategies entirely," he said.

The issue is further complicated when players are available but with restrictions imposed by their national boards. Kolkata Knight Riders, for instance, signed Cameron Green for a record fee, expecting him to contribute as an all-rounder. However, he has been limited to a batting role after Cricket Australia restricted his bowling workload, leaving the team short of options.

Similarly, Cooper Connolly is featuring purely as a batter for Punjab Kings due to injury-related restrictions, despite being picked for his all-round abilities. Such scenarios further complicate team dynamics and reduce tactical flexibility.

Former India cricketer Aakash Chopra voiced strong criticism, suggesting franchises should at least receive compensation when players fail to deliver their expected roles. Meanwhile, Ajinkya Rahane, leading Kolkata Knight Riders, hinted at the challenges posed by external restrictions during post-match discussions.

The debate intensified after Ben Duckett withdrew from the season to focus on red-ball cricket, following a similar precedent involving Harry Brook, who is serving a ban for pulling out earlier. Legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar has called for stricter enforcement of penalties, stating that existing measures lack sufficient deterrence.

LeBron Sets All-Time Wins Record as Lakers Win

LOS ANGELES

LeBron James etched his name deeper into NBA history by recording his 1,229th career win, surpassing Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for the most combined regular season and playoff victories, as the Los Angeles Lakers defeated the Cleveland Cavaliers 127-113. While James contributed 14 points, five rebounds and six assists, it was Luka Doncic who led the charge with a dominant 42-point, 12-assist performance, guiding the Lakers to their 13th win in the last 14 games. The victory also secured Los Angeles the Pacific Division title and confirmed their playoff berth.

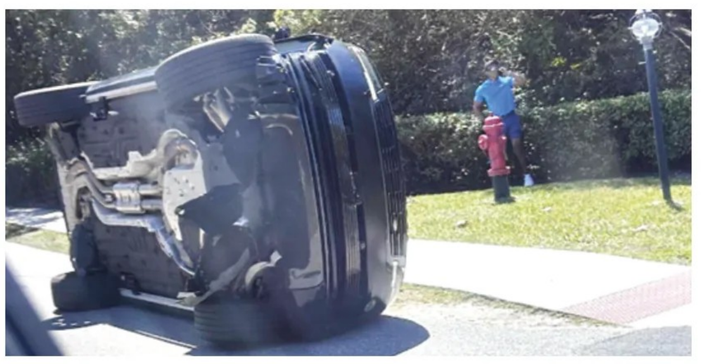
Woods to Seek Treatment after Pleading Not Guilty in DUI Case

ORLANDO

Golf legend Tiger Woods has announced he will step away from the sport to seek treatment, days after pleading not guilty in a driving under the influence (DUI) case following a car crash in Florida.

Woods, 50, said in a statement that prioritising his well-being and recovery was essential at this stage. "This is necessary in order for me to prioritise my well-being and work toward lasting recovery," he shared on social media, confirming he will also miss the Masters for the second consecutive year.

According to reports from the Martin County Sheriff's Office, deputies responding to the incident found Woods showing signs of impairment after his SUV clipped a trailer and overturned on a residential road. He was later arrested on suspicion of DUI and released on bail after several hours.



Authorities noted that Woods had bloodshot eyes, slow movements, and appeared lethargic during questioning. Two pain pills, identified as hydrocodone, were reportedly found in his possession. While a Breathalyzer test showed no presence of alcohol, Woods declined to take a urine test, which under Florida law can constitute a separate offence.

Court records indicate that Woods has entered a written plea of not guilty and plans to waive his scheduled arraignment later this month. His defence team has yet to comment publicly on the case.

This marks the second time Woods has taken a break from golf following a car crash. In 2009, he stepped away from the game for four months after a high-profile accident near his home. More recently, injuries from a 2021 crash severely impacted his right leg, limiting his appearances on tour.

Woods has not competed in an official event since the 2024 British Open and had been aiming for a return at the Masters, a tournament he has won five times. Beyond playing, he also plays a significant role in shaping the sport through his involvement with the PGA Tour's leadership. As one of golf's most influential figures, Woods' decision to focus on recovery underscores the challenges he continues to face both on and off the course.

From Hobby to Passion: Young Fencer Deeksha Making Her Mark

BENGALURU

What began as a simple recreational activity has transformed into a serious sporting pursuit for 14-year-old Deeksha L Gowda, who is steadily emerging as a promising talent in Indian fencing.

Clad in protective white gear and a mesh mask, Deeksha may appear unreadable on the piste, but beneath the surface lies a sharp, focused competitor. Unlike many fencers who celebrate loudly after scoring points, she prefers to conserve her energy and remain composed. "I don't want to waste energy shouting. I just focus on giving my best," she says, reflecting her disciplined approach to the sport.

A student of Vidyaniketan Public School, Deeksha took up fencing six years ago on the advice of a relative. She began training under coach Irom Devan Singh at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium, where she honed her skills in the sabre discipline. Her strong footwork and tactical awareness have since become defining features of her style.

Deeksha's rise in the sport has been impressive. She clinched gold in the under-14 category at the Sub-junior National Fencing Championship in Cuttack last year, adding to her earlier success at the national level in 2022. She also went on to become the state under-17 champion in 2025, signalling her rapid progression through the ranks.

Despite the increasing expectations that come with success, Deeksha remains grounded. She admits that while pressure has grown over time, her love for the sport keeps her motivated. "Initially, it was just fun. Now, there's pressure, but I enjoy practicing and competing so much that it doesn't bother me," she explains.

Her journey has also inspired her family, with her siblings and cousins taking up fencing as well. Supported by her parents, Deeksha is determined to pursue both academics and sport, with aspirations of studying psychology in the future.

For Deeksha, fencing is more than just competition—it is a platform for personal growth. "It has taught me focus, discipline, and how to stay in the present," she says, as she continues to chase her dreams in a sport still growing in India.

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